The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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CONGRESS CONVENES

FOR THE twenty-fifth time in the history of the republic, Congress convened in special session and heard President Roosevelt's reassuring message in which a proposal for the modification of taxes adequate to encourage productive enterprise, especially for the smaller businesses, was immediately followed by a four-point legislative program to check the business recession.

We do not know to what extent Mr. Roosevelt has been influenced by Hilaire Belloc's masterful and penetrating analysis of capitalism; but the underlying philosophy in Mr. Belloc's "Servile State" and "Restoration of Property," and in Mr. Roosevelt's message, is extraordinarily similar.

Capitalism is regarded by the English economist as a state of society in which a minority control the means of production, leaving the mass of the citizens—the proletariat—dispossessed. Industrial capitalism is the enemy of freedom. Attached to it are the twin evils of insecurity and insufficiency. The proletariat are not sufficiently clothed, housed and fed. Their insufficient supply is unstable. They live in a perpetual anxiety.

We are drifting today, Mr. Belloc believes, in the direction of a society in which a minority, controlling the means of production, exploits the proletariat and keeps alive those whom it does not exploit at a wage by a subsidy of some sort. We must therefore strive to create a society in which sufficiency and security can be combined with freedom—a society in which property is well distributed and so large a proportion of the families in the state severally *own* and therefore control the means of production as to determine the general tone of society.

Immediate reforms are necessary to restore the economic basis of freedom. The farmer, the craftsman and the small retail tradesman must be reestablished. The tax system must be used to handicap Big Business and to protect Little Busi-

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ness. The division of property in enterprises necessarily large must be among holders in sufficient amount. Every effort must be made to confirm such wholesale divisions by institutions which shall maintain it and prevent at all costs a recurrent degradation of property into capitalism.

Mr. Roosevelt insisted, and rightly so, that special attention should be given to lightening inequitable burdens on the enterprise of Little Business. Even those businesses of average size have difficulties of financing and distribution which are not shared by large corporations. By special tax consideration, therefore, Little Business should receive more equal opportunity to compete with Big Business. In this way a more effective method of checking the growing concentration of economic control and the resultant monopolistic practises, which persist today in spite of anti-trust statutes, may be found. This threat to free competitive enterprise must be destroyed.

As a practical application of this common-sense philosophy, the House Ways and Means Tax Sub-Committee decided tentatively to exempt from the undistributed profits tax all corporations with net incomes of $5,000 or less annually.

Mr. Roosevelt then emphasized "the broad central truth that this administration has pledged itself to the people of the United States to carry on with a wide social program pointed toward higher living standards and a more just distribution of the gains of civilization." Much of that program, he pointed out, is already in effect; but its continued and complete success depends on "a wider distribution of an immensely enlarged national income." In the attainment of the broad central purpose he cited four objectives which Congress is now considering: wages and hours legislation; an "all weather" crop control program; the reorganization of executive departments; and national planning for the better use of natural resources.

The vast majority of our citizens are in substantial agreement that the exploitation of child labor, starvation wages and the "stretch-out" system imposed upon the poorest paid workers must cease. We are informed that a new approach to the wage and hour question is to appoint special boards, as occasion may arise, to deal with the so-called sub-standard industries. Such a board would be similar to the mediation board which may be called into existence in railway labor disputes. The merit claimed for this proposal is that it would not disturb industry as a whole, that it would be applicable only to industries in which abuses exist, and that it would make possible the consideration of wages and hours in the light of conditions in a particular industry instead of industry as a whole. Congress will probably adopt this or some similar modification of the original Black-Connery Bill.

We heartily agree with Mr. Roosevelt that "if the new farm act provides for expenditure of funds beyond those planned in the regular budget, additional means should be provided to yield the additional revenue." The budget must be balanced in the next fiscal year.

Government, most people will agree, should be reorganized along the lines of modern business administrative practise so as to increase efficiency, minimize error, duplication and waste and, by extending the merit system to cover practically all non-policy-determining posts, to raise the morale of the public service. The same forward-looking principles should be applied to the conservation of our national resources.

The national stigma of lynching should be immediately eradicated from our national life. The attitude of Senator Connolly who threatened a filibuster against the anti-lynching bill "that will last until the regular session of Congress" is deplorable. The reading of a five-hour filibustering speech made by Senator Black against the same type of legislation in 1935 merely aggravates the insult of Mr. Black's continued presence on the Supreme Court bench. The American people are not in a mood for reactionary wrangling.

We again express the hope that, during the coming five weeks of this highly important special session, the utmost measure of cooperation will mark the joint labors of the Executive and Congress to give practical expression to the hopes and aspirations of all our people.

Week by Week

THE TRAGIC failure of the Brussels conference thus far to achieve anything more tangible than the expression of mild, absent-minded regret that Japan is, perhaps, an aggressor nation and that Japan may, perhaps, have violated the nine-power treaty, has practically destroyed confidence in the ability of peace-loving nations to settle international disputes by some other method than the threat of armed force. The delegates waited around optimistically for something to happen, and having wrangled pleasantly for a time over the diplomatic phrasing of innocuous notes, vanished from the council chamber. Japan's invading armies, having captured Shanghai, resumed aggressive action in the wealthy Shantung province in North China. Britain, unperturbed by the Brussels fiasco, made friendly overtures to Italy and Germany. Should these overtures be rejected, Britain, France and the United States face the alternative of either standing by while dictators employ other illegitimate and immoral means of extending their power or of restraining aggression

The Trend of Events

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by positive and unequivocal action. During the week the draft of a second declaration will be prepared, again outlining the attitude the nine-power treaty signatories would have the world take toward Japan. It is quite possible that a few delegates will still be on hand, including the American diplomats, to sign the document. We may then expect another prolonged debate as to whether it should be submitted to Tokyo.

Fascist Brazil?

FOR YEARS without number the quaint custom has persisted of referring to South American nations as "sister republics." The assumption of dictatorial powers by President Getulio Vargas has therefore disturbed a great many people whose knowledge of Latin American affairs has been, and unfortunately continues to be, most fragmentary. With the exception of Colombia, no government in South America actually represents the popular will of the people. Dr. Vargas seized the presidency through a military revolt in 1930 and has been suppressing real or imaginary counter-revolts ever since. The United States has in the past accepted fascistic governments, which profess democratic principles, as members of the American family of nations in good standing and will continue to do so until European powers aggressively intervene in Latin American affairs to support totalitarian governments.

Private Investment

THE COUNTRY seems generally to agree with President Roosevelt that "obviously an immediate task is to try to increase the use of private capital to create employment." The drive to this end is almost disturbingly broad and can end up in several rather contrasting places. For the sake of short-term objectives we may be persuaded to wipe out fair beginnings of reforms of more permanent utility. We may become even more indifferent to what things are built or made just so long as in the process we are put to work. We may grow to care even less who it is that controls American investment and resign ourselves still more dully to our own irresponsibility for the direction over the exploitation of our resources and of our own labor. It is by no means simply a question of "the bureaucrats in Washington or private business." A more important division was noted at the time Congress reassembled—between centralized monopolistic economy and small business units. This struggle will probably be carried on around two centers, one vague, the other clear. A lot of "business" sentiment will exert pressure against wages and hours, farm, planning, executive reorganization and any other reform, as hindering natural (from its own viewpoint) recovery. The other, and more particular, center will be the tax laws, and specifically the undistributed corporate profits tax. This tax will likely serve as a touchstone of the current session of Congress. If large corporations are allowed unchallenged to withhold from the consumers and ordinary stock holders money to build reserves which will furnish the principal source of new private investment, then the capital used to create employment will be too privately controlled for our taste.

Coal Mines

A DECLINING industry of primary importance in many nations of the globe is coal mining. All the tensions of a superannuated capitalism and steam industrialism pull coal mining into painful contortions which afflict the whole social body. Coal companies at present have too small incomes and prospects of prosperity to be run with the efficiency and social grace necessary to make them bearable. Miners are underemployed, and are not paid at all when the mines are closed. Coal is not mined as economically as it could be if expenses and layoffs were not so crucial. For a long time something has had to be done. The British just settled on one program. All coal mine royalties, that is, rents which the private individuals and institutions (including, among the major beneficiaries, the Established Church and high lords of the realm) have collected from operators by their ownership of the land, are to be unified and taken over by the nation. The asking price was £150,000,000, and the sum granted will be £66,450,000. With this state control and ownership, the government will guide, or enforce, amalgamation of mine operating companies, and continue present marketing schemes with additional regulations to protect consumers and workers. The anthracite industry in Pennsylvania is in little less startling need of rationalization. The peculiar problem there since the depression has been bootleg miners, a problem no one has yet dared face. Now the union and the operators have appointed a joint committee to confer with public officials and work out plans for stabilization. Unless this committee, and similar committees elsewhere in the country, can settle upon and carry through plans for creative free action, we too will be forced to something at least as untraditional as England's "Tory Socialism."

The Human Side

ONE OF the most warming events in our recent national history, and, we think, one of the most characteristically American, has been the raising of funds at the President's Birthday Ball to aid the Warm Springs Foundation. Mr. Roosevelt's own encounter with infantile paralysis in full manhood, the tragic legacy it left him and the extreme valor of his

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long fight in surmounting it, make a stirring and heroic story; but while his meed of praise and admiration has never, we think, been denied him in any quarter, it comes clearly to memory that during his first presidential candidacy many assumed as a matter of course, and said plainly, that a man so crippled would never be chosen by the electorate for their highest honor. The Birthday Balls, in spite of the elements of organization and publicity, had all the marks of a really spontaneous national reply. And there has been a peculiar and poetic rightness in people's dancing on the birthday of a man who will never dance again, for the charity nearest his heart—the helping, often the restoring, of children similarly crippled. This in addition to the fact that the more than $3,000,000 realized thus far have made a tremendous practical difference in combating the disease and exploring its causes. It is good news that a Publishers' Council has been created to help the new National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, launched by the President this fall, and that a large number of the country's editors and publishers have already accepted the invitation to membership. These broad movements to help our fellows, initiated by people instead of government, are, we repeat, a peculiarly American thing, the natural technique of the country not only for solving a problem but also for expressing an ideal.

An Omen To Study

WE RECOMMEND for the quiet perusal of our readers the list of 500 books selected by the American Booksellers' Association recently published in connection with the National Book Fair. It is probably foolish to take it very seriously. Although the people responsible for it are about as "booky" as any in the country and although they have probably nearly all had the best of American educations, the list no doubt fails to reflect the highest taste or most serious educational thought of its perpetrators. Taken seriously, it is utterly devastating. It would indicate a break in western culture much more cataclysmic than that which occurred at the time of barbarian invasions or at the Renaissance or any other period. It is puny, provincial and degradingly philistine. Naturally it contains a great number of very great books, but these are well scattered. Apparently "contemporary interest," or rather, interest to contemporaries, was the principal criterion in choices, and how contemptuous the mentors were of the quality of mind they had to deal with! It is hard to pick out the department which seems most loathsomely inadequate, they are all so genuinely frightful, but one might begin with the most important division—absolutely lacking—and proceed toward "Books for Boys and Girls" and score 1, 2, 3 and so on. Score 2 would be given "Philosophy": Marcus Aurelius, Sir Thomas Browne, John Dewey, Will Durant, Ralph Waldo Emerson (twice), Plato ("Republic"), Saint Augustine ("Confessions"), George Santayana, Henry Thoreau (twice).

The World Grows Strange

ONE DISTURBING feature today about peripheral phenomena—our name for happenings on the edge of things, which must be gaged more subtly and specially than fixed central facts like eating, sleeping and dying—is that they so often fail to conform to expectation. The clews have been lost, or the rules changed; either that, or we have been wrong from the first, an even more unacceptable thought. New York City electing a reform administration twice in succession, England listening with courteous attention while Italy not only rattles the saber but carves a sizable bite for herself with it, these things put one off very much. And now comes an item which we cannot profess to understand. An Englishman—not a shopkeeper, it is true, but a bookkeeper—dashed up to the gates of the Paris Exposition one day last week and announced that he had run the whole way from Bournemouth. He did not claim to have covered the Channel bed on foot, of course, but asserted that although the Queen Mary had brought him across that body of water, he had not ceased to gallop back and forth upon her decks for a single instant after boarding her—also at a gallop. Disembarking at the double-quick at Cherbourg (his story concluded), he had continued the same winged pace to the Exposition. And there, in brief, he was. Paris at once took him to its heart; he was fêted, written up, photographed.

HAVING enjoyed all this to the full, he then revealed that he was a fraud—that he had ridden comfortably by train from Cherbourg to Paris (and for all we know, from London to Bournemouth as well), and had changed into his track suit just before pulling into Paris. He ended up by pointing out "with a smile" that anyone who had bothered to check on his story would have seen that it involved covering twelve miles an hour; and expresed the pious hope that all this would be a lesson to credulous humanity. The French public, we are told, took the hoax "good-humoredly." Now what, we want to know, has become of the sceptical Frenchman of old, who was a realist first and good-humored afterward? Where is the hydrochloric eye, the infallible tendency to put two and two together and get four miles an hour and no more? If the logical fury that led them to tear a man apart for an exact idea has gone, and on the other hand, the English have taken to abstract demonstration, we (personally speaking) are lost indeed.

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REALISM AND PAPRIKA

By C. JOHN McCOLE

READERS of Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones" will recall how this play's central character, as he stumbles through the dense growth of the jungle in flight from the superstitious natives he had long terrorized, encounters a series of phantasmagoria which are symbolic of all the nameless fears of his tortured conscience. Jones sees the ghostly apparition of the Negro porter he had killed, the guard he had murdered, the auction block and the slave ship with their suggestions of all the horrors of his prenatal past, and the gruesome human sacrifice, with the gaping jaws of the crocodile waiting to devour him. For the fleeing "emperor" these apparitions have all the terror of realities: he runs around in circles until he is captured by his enemies.

In our attempts to cut our way through the tangled growths of contemporary fiction, certain of us, in a manner not unlike Jones, sometimes find ourselves pursued by a number of pale literary principles which we may be inclined to mistake for sound critical theories—spectral fallacies that we need constantly to be warned against. The sound theories, if we would but recognize them, are not difficult to face; it is their pale reflections that frighten us around the critical circle.

There is, for example, the deep-rooted belief, so noticeably coloring present-day criticism, that realism inheres only in certain subjects. We are continually hearing certain books praised for the way in which their authors have "unflinchingly" used themes which are, in themselves, supposed to be "powerfully" realistic. As a matter of fact, however, genuine realism—as distinguished from what Stuart Sherman called "realism"—does not necessarily inhere only in certain subjects. In "The Cathedral" Hugh Walpole has observed that there may be just as much that is genuinely realistic in the tap of blind Pew's cane as in "any number of adulteries." We think, of course, of the Stevenson character as unreal, and of "Treasure Island" as romantic; and yet, the steady tapping of the old pirate's cane upon the frozen road, and the rattling of the inn-door bolt as he tries to enter, are, in one important sense, far more real than, let us say, Mr. Dos Passos's Charley Anderson, whose promiscuities have been exaggerated into all the effects of parody. We are, indeed, today witnessing such curious reversals of the older standards of what constituted realism, as romantic Cinderella plots colored up by Freudism until they sound like patterns of Casanova-like realism; and serious, genuinely powerful themes, such as sex, cheapened until they sometimes become about as significantly real as the story of Cinderella.

Secondly, there is the mistaken idea that genuine realism can be secured—or must be secured—by the use of a certain kind of harsh language. We are constantly being assured that such-and-such a novel is "powerfully realistic" and "commendably frank" in the way in which it employs every four-letter word and every profane ejaculation which, we are told, would be employed by the types of characters with which the novel deals. John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" is a case in point. Here is a novel rich in undertones, effectively written, skilful in its use of emotional nuances, and with, indeed, no little poetry woven through the texture of its style. But, presumably because he wished convincingly to show the harsh and "real" environment surrounding George, Lennie and the other ranchers, Mr. Steinbeck thought it necessary to fill his pages with enough oaths to see a ranch quite comfortably through several months. And yet, in John Galsworthy's "Justice" the same effects are gained without having recourse, as I remember it, to a single oath; and a modern character comes to my mind who, when he is caught with paper clips instead of studs on his dress shirt, utters a single, provocative "Damn!" that is as eloquent as if he had put into ranch language the whole curse of Cain.

There is also the fallacy that almost any kind of intensity makes for realism. Nothing, as a matter of fact, could be further from the truth. Intensity, earnestness, sincerity and strong emotion—these may all be well-nigh indispensable in evoking definite literary effects. But they are, in themselves, no guarantees of effects that are highly literary. "A man is in earnest," Brother Leo has remarked, "when he is trying to catch a train, sincere when he asserts that he detests spinach, painstaking when he manufactures a powerful motor car, feels deeply when his wife dies, communicates emotion when he waves a flag. Yet in doing any one of these things or all of them, he does not necessarily create a work of literature." Nor does an author create a work of literature when he gives us characters—however intense they may be—who are merely irritable or neurasthenic; for men and women in fiction may have the most highly disorganized nervous systems without having, at the same time, anything of that real passion we expect them to have in enduring art. A man may be intense when he hates or loves; but he may also be intense, as someone has remarked, when he is only calling for a cup of coffee.

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That our day demands a realistic treatment in the work of those authors who would be true to its prevailingly realistic temper—this is another pale doctrine that is often thought to be the embodiment of sound critical theory. Most writing does reflect, of course, much of the temper of its day, and a great number of the social conditions of the age in which it was written. And if that day, or those conditions, happen to be predominantly naturalistic or morally chaotic, it is perhaps inevitable that literary expression should, in some degree, show them as such.

Still, criticism has come to concern itself overly much with literature in terms of social phenomena; and, as a result, we are more and more inclined to focus our attention upon values that are timely, but not timeless. We continually lose sight of the fact that the truly great writer almost instinctively seeks and finds patterns of expression and feeling that relate themselves to much besides his own day: his work is so attuned to the universal that it serves as an index to much besides the one short moment that he is privileged to call his times.

And it is this failure properly to emphasize the universal which has so frequently made us place undue stress upon the particular—which has made us think that realism can be reinforced simply by amassing a sufficient number of particulars. We have come to intensify the denotative quality in writing, and to minimize the connotative quality. We have come to think of realism as something which can exist only in bulky novels whose pages are cluttered with facts. We call Thomas Wolfe a realist, forgetting that if he is so, it is not chiefly because of his verbose descriptions of rivers or the minutiae of life in the Gant family; we think of Theodore Dreiser's novels as realistic, failing to remember that it is not their detailed expositions of stock market procedure or interior decorating which make them such.

The plain truth of the matter is that genuine realism is a product of the imaginative processes of art as much, though in a different way, as is romanticism; and it flourishes best and in its most artistic form in writing which has been stripped of the factual sufficiently to give imagination and elemental passion some room to enter. The most convincingly realistic note struck in a play may be, not that effected by a lavish use of properties, but that resulting from some few lines of dialogue, simple and inevitable, which lay bare a human heart with all its tragedy and anguish. There may, quite possibly, be as much that is "real" in an old Shakespearean performance with its one tree used to represent the Forest of Arden, or in an old play given by the Greeks upon their bare stage, as in a modern play heavily reinforced by properties.

In every kind of writing that we think of as an art form, the same holds true. Franz Werfel's realistic "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh" does not depend upon such matters as the details of military strategy by which the mountain was held; it does not depend on these facts for the way in which it rises through a climactic series of undertones to that poignant moment when Gabriel Bagradian, forgotten by his rescuers, is killed upon his son's grave: "The second Turkish bullet shattered his temple. He clung to the wood, tore it down along with him. His son's cross lay upon his heart." Trygve Gulbranssen's "The Wind from the Mountains" is a realistic novel; but its realism is artistic and memorable because of its employment of such simplified emotional tones as those suggested in Old Dag's only remark to his daughter-in-law upon the birth of her son: "May God bless this thy child, and be with thee all thy days, and take thee to Him when life is ended."

In that discerning essays of hers which she titled "The Novel Démeublé," and which I believe she later reprinted in "Not under Forty," Willa Cather reminds us of the elder Dumas's dictum that to write a great work of art a man needs but "one passion, and four walls." It is quite possible, she tells us, to bolster up a weak book with enough details to produce the false illusion of reality; but all details are valuable only when they have become so completely synthesized as to give the impression of existing "in the emotional penumbra of the characters themselves." For, as she explains, it is "the inexplicable presence of the thing not named, of the overtone divined by the ear but not heard by it, the verbal mood, the emotional aura of the fact or the thing or the deed, that give high quality" to that writing we call art. It is the emotion which emanates from and surrounds the fact—not the fact itself.

There is another literary fallacy which is commonly accepted today as a valid principle; although it is, in fact, but the pallid ghost of a sound principle. I refer to the primary questions which a critic might commonly be expected to ask when he attempts to judge any work of literature. The majority of critics—especially when dealing with realistic work—falsely suppose that there are only two of these primary questions: exactly what has the author attempted to represent, and how successful has he been in making that representation? But to these queries should be added a third, which no one, I think, has better expressed than Edith Wharton: "Was the subject chosen worth representing—has it the quality of being what Balzac called 'vrai dans l'art'?"

Indeed, without this last question, the first two have no relevancy whatsoever to the processes of art if we think of those processes as both selective and creative. An author may try to represent merely the insignificant, the meaningless, the disordered, or the repulsive; and he may be successful in his attempt—as many authors are—beyond even the expectations of his most fervent ad-

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mirers. Is his critic to conclude that, by these tokens such an author is an artist? If so, is there any distinction between the art of a Thomas Mann and the "art" of a "tale told by an idiot"?

Finally, there is the common failure to make a very necessary distinction between realism and "realism"—between what is true to life, and what some reader has designated as only paprika; between the two attitudes suggested by Robert Frost when he referred to the man who has to have a good deal of dirt with his potato to know that he has a real potato, and the man who is satisfied with his potato brushed clean. Realism is the opposite of idealism; but there is nothing in this to imply that it need exclude the tried ideals of humanity, for those ideals are among the significantly real things which life suggests when presented truly.

Realism, then, does not depend upon subject-matter alone; it does not demand an indiscriminate use of language; it cannot be secured by mere intensity; it should be just as attuned to the universal as any other literary method; it is not guaranteed by details, but by the "verbal mood" which details can be made to produce; it should deal worthily, not only with the actual, but with what is actually worth dealing with; and it should not be confused with high seasoning. These principles are the embodiments of sound critical tradition. It is their spectral and specious opposites—or the ghostly half-truths which often attend them—that drive us around so many critical circles.

BENJAMIN STERLING, TEACHER

By CLARA FOOTE ADAMS

HE TAUGHT school for sixty-three years, but he is by no means a noted educator. He is an aged Negro, an ex-slave, unknown beyond the few Georgia and Alabama towns in which he has lived. However, there are few places of importance of which he does not know for he has made a study of the world about him for ninety years, and of the heaven above since he "got religion" as a child with the help of his "white Missus," down in Georgia. His name, Benjamin, is an evidence of the religious atmosphere that surrounded him in his youth. He is named for the twelfth son of the Hebrew patriarch, Jacob. This son's name, he explained to me, not trusting my knowledge of biblical genealogy, was Benjamin. And his name is Benjamin, he said. But when he was a boy he was mostly called Ben. Just Ben.

Benjamin Sterling's grandfather came to America in the hold of a Yankee slave ship, and moaned for his native jungles to the end of his days. To his descendants he left a legacy of racial mysteries and traditions, the spell of which is not yet altogether broken. Benjamin Sterling is an African. He was brought up on tribal lore cherished by a captive people in an alien land. He has heard his people's song in their native tongue. The rhythm of the Congo is in his blood. This is not so with his children. They are free-born American citizens, concerned with American life. Benjamin was born the chattel property of a Georgia cotton planter, James Sterling. He went by the name of the man who owned him, not the man who fathered him, and that of Jacob's youngest son. James Sterling, so Benjamin says, was not a wealthy man. He was a "common liver." He had only ten slaves. He owned 160 acres and it took ten slaves to cultivate them. He was a good man, Benjamin says, good to his slaves. He whipped them when they needed it, as he did his children, but he was good to them.

Benjamin was eighteen when the war ended, and Mr. Sterling told him he was free. He understood that freedom was something greatly to be desired but did not know just what its special advantages were. He asked his mother what it meant to be free. What was he to do now that he was free? He had heretofore worked with the stock on the place, and served as a kind of waiting boy for young Mr. Jimmy. He held Mr. Jimmy's horse for the young master to mount.

"You go on feeding the mules, and holding Mr. Jimmy's horse," his mother told him. "What else you think you going to do?"

There were a good many things, he decided as he thought it over, that he was going to do. For one thing he was going to learn to read, and be a school teacher.

To this end he made a trade. He agreed to pick a hundred chestnuts for Mr. Jimmy in exchange for a Blue Back Spelling Book and some assistance in using it. The chestnuts were delivered and the spelling book turned over to him. Professor Sterling says of the transaction: "I had been provided for all my life but I had never before been paid for a service. The spelling book was mine because I had earned it. It belonged to me. I loved it. I learned to spell every word in it. I learned it by heart. Later I came into possession of a McGuffey's First Reader; this I took to bed with me at night for fear of losing it. My next book was a Monteith's Geography. On the first page I read, 'Geography is the study of the earth's surface'; then I turned to the map of

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Africa and traced out the rivers and plains that had nurtured my race. They have belonged to me ever since. I shall never set foot on African soil but my spirit walks it."

With a spelling book, a first reader, and a geography of his own, the education of Benjamin Sterling was under way. He says: "I left the Sterling family the year after the war and made a contract with a neighboring plantation owner to receive $40 a year and two hours a week of instruction. My mother was responsible for the instruction clause. She did all she could to help me get the education I wanted. My labor was in the field where I worked from daylight till dark. I did my studying at the noon hour, and at night by burning light'ood (fat pine knots). When the Freedman's Aid Society established a school for Negroes in our neighborhood I attended on days too rainy for work in the field, and between crops. My progress was slow but at the age of twenty-seven I finished the fourth grade and began teaching. I have been teaching ever since."

Somewhere along his teaching career he attended the Alabama State Normal and Industrial School from which he received a diploma. And from the state he received a teacher's life certificate. These are framed and hang over the mantelpiece in his living-room. He points to them with pride whenever the occasion permits and remarks that he is a great deal better off in America than he would be climbing bamboo trees in Africa. There is humor and humility in his philosophy.

Concerning slavery he says: "I tell my people that our enslavement was a blessing. Few of them agree with me, but this is what I think. We were a benighted and idolatrous race. Slavery was God's way of breaking the fetters of darkness that bound us, and of bringing us, against our will, into the light. [He worships a loving but inscrutable God.] Here in America we have received the blessings of Christianity, and civilization. We have become a free people. I tell my people that Lincoln's proclamation of freedom for the black man, read to the world in 1863, was written the day the first shipload of Negro slaves touched the shores of Virginia in 1619. This day the enlightment and liberation of the Negro race was begun."

During his first twenty-three years of teaching Professor Sterling changed schools a number of times. Then he came to a small, north Alabama town, Sheffield. Here he taught for forty years. He saw the town grow into a city. For twenty-five years he was principal of the colored school, then he was overtaken by a new pedagogical day. The principal of a school must hold degrees he did not possess. A new-generation graduate took his place and he was given the eighth grade classroom. This he taught for fifteen years. Then he said he would rest a while, except occasionally when he might be especially needed. He often helps the neighborhood children with their lessons. He says he is glad to have the children come in.

He lives alone. He says he likes his own house. He likes to sit under his reading light, that has taken the place of the light'ood knots, and read. Summer days he spends on the porch, set a few feet back from the highway, and watches the passing cars for a nod from a friend, and for out-of-state license plates. He likes out-of-state cars, they bring far places to his door: Florida, Maine, California and Georgia. There are many cars from over in Georgia—when he lived in Georgia people drove carriages, or wagons, and rode mules. He rode a mule to the mill for Marse Sterling every week that rolled 'round. He is always glad to see the Georgia cars. They bring him pleasant memories, memories of the past.

The past has a way, here of late, of coming to him, particularly toward the end of the day, when people are going home from work, when the shadows are falling. And there are often figures in the shadows—Mammy, Grandpappy, Marse Sterling, little Marse Jimmy. Figures in the shadows. And voices, unlike those he hears today. Grandpappy telling a story of magic and the Evil One. Mammy calling him. Somebody saying Marse Sterling wants him at the house. He starts to rise, and they are gone, the figures—and the voices. He chides himself, gets up and walks about a little. He mustn't think too much of the past. He must live in the present, talk to the living, not the dead. He goes over and pays a call on the man next door, a man not half his age. He would prefer people his own age. But there are so few. And those he knows do not interest him. They talk of nothing but their ailments, and the weather, or the past. He is often at a loss for someone to talk to. Lonely. Young people are good company, but they have little time to talk to an old man. They are busy, as he has been all his life until now. And now that he isn't busy the days are long, and there are shadows in the evening, and figures.

But he doesn't mind. Before long he'll join those in the shadows, and talk to them. He'll answer Marse Sterling. And tell Mammy and Grandpappy what he's been doing—serving the Lord and working for a living, teaching. Teaching his color for sixty-three years, he'll tell Mammy.

But Benjamin Sterling does not talk of going away yet. He talks of teaching again, when he's rested. Ben, the slave boy, and for sixty-three years a school teacher, talks of modern education. There are things he'll tell Mammy when he meets her, but he isn't through talking to those around him yet. He goes over and spends the evening with friends, walks in to town on an errand, pulls up a chair for his young white friend who comes in with pencil and notebook for a story. He's glad to see her. He likes to be inteviewed, and says so.

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THE TOSS-UP

By ALBERT EISELE

PEOPLE felt sorry for the new tenant on the Sibrel farm. And they felt doubly sorry when they learned that he was a somewhat elderly man with no children or help of his own.

People always felt sorry for the new tenant on the Sibrel farm—because unfailingly he stayed but one year. Mr. Sibrel, the landlord, for as far back as anyone in the neighborhood could remember, had kept no tenant longer than a single year. Always, when the year and the one-year lease were up, he had kicked the tenant off.

Everybody blamed old Sibrel. He was a red-faced and parsimonious man who was firmly convinced that his quarter-section was the best farm in Minnesota. It had been the original Sibrel homestead; Mr. Sibrel had farmed it himself for many years—had farmed it when it was freshly-broken and fertile prairie soil. But Mr. Sibrel, even then, had begun robbing the soil; and it had been robbed yearly ever since until now the worn-out knolls, which had never known clovers or other legumes, were capable of producing little more than nubbins of corn, or oats no taller than the wild-rose bushes which infested it and which bloomed on a level with the meager heads of grain. But even so, Mr. Sibrel made no allowances for the soil-robbing which, both under himself and his long string of successors, had been going on for years: the man still lived in the past: he still regarded his worn-out hills as highly fertile and, when his farm failed, as always it did, to produce the highest grain yield in the threshing run, then the land itself was not at fault but the tenant. And so out the tenant would go.

But if the new tenant—the elderly man who, with his wife, moved to the place in March—had any opinions on the general situation, he kept them to himself. He seemed quiet, industrious and unassuming. Neighborhood talk had it that he had lost a half-section during the depression, and had since been unable to get back on his feet.

The month of March was cold and stormy, but April brought drying winds and the spring seeding. The neighbors did their seeding in the midday winds, but the elderly man waited until late each day when the winds had gone down—then he went out into the brown cornfields of the previous year and seeded until dark. "I never like to seed in a strong wind," he told a neighbor; "seeding on a windy day makes streaked grain."

The seed sown, he disked and harrowed his fields, demolishing and leveling the old cornstalks. The weather was windy as before but colder and clouded; huge cloud masses rolled over at intervals and darkened the earth while loosened cornfield litter drove over the smoothed fields like snow. Then the work was finished.

And almost overnight, it seemed, the young sprouts began coming up through the cornstalk debris, the emerald-green of the new crop contrasting sharply with the dead-brown of the old. Mr. Sibrel, the landlord, drove out from town. Some of the neighboring fields showed streaks in the growing grain—where, at seeding, the wind had caught flurries of the sown seed and swept it out of line. But the elderly man's fields lay evenly carpeted. The landlord walked over his tenant's fields and examined them with care. "Nice oats," he said, and returned to town.

The month of May dawned summerlike, and soon the rhythmic and metallic song of corn planters filled the air. But the elderly man did not begin planting when his neighbors did. "I never plant corn before the twelfth of May," he told a neighbor across the fence; "and until then, I get the ground good and ready." The neighbors continued to plant; many finished; then the weather turned wet and cold. The elderly man's seed corn was in the sack, but his neighbors' was in the ground. And the neighbors became worried; they went out into their planted fields, dropped to hands and knees and began digging up the hills, to see if the seed was rotting in the ground. Much of it was, and day after day the troubled neighbors, fearing that they would need to replant, went out into their fields and "rooted." Then warm weather really came, and the elderly man planted his corn. It grew almost to the last kernel, and his fields stood strikingly and beautifully three-in-a-hill. The neighboring fields were spotted and uneven.

Mr. Sibrel came out on one of his visits, looked at his tenant's corn and said, "I want to give you credit—you've got a perfect stand."

The neighbors, too, talking from across the fence, declared it a perfect stand. "But let me tell you this," said one neighbor, "that just because you've got a perfect stand is no reason for you to bank on the landlord letting you stay another year! You've got a perfect stand of corn, but the crop isn't grown yet. A lot of things can happen between now and husking time. And if anything does happen, then old Sibrel will show you the road!"

"I do my best," said the elderly man slowly, "and I have faith enough in mankind to feel that he won't kick me off unless he has good reason."

"You never can tell," said the neighbor. "If

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you make one mistake, out you go! I've seen that too often! And if something happens that's a toss-up—if it's a matter of doubt between the farm and the tenant, then it's the farm that gets the benefit of it."

"If I'm careful and don't make a mistake," said the elderly man, "then there won't be any toss-up."

June waned and the alfalfa became varicolored. And one morning the elderly man mowed his alfalfa. In the afternoon he cocked it; and that night the odor of curing alfalfa stole to and enveloped the farmplace. Then he put the alfalfa in the dry. And he was just in time. For that night came a drenching rain.

Mr. Sibrel drove out from town (he always appeared after a rain). "Well," he said, "you harvested your alfalfa in good shape, I must say."

And in the cultivation of his corn the elderly man likewise progressed apace. He plowed it first lengthwise, then he crossed it. The corn, at the third plowing, was tall enough to rustle to a breeze; at the fourth it was closing its rows; and at the fifth the broad leaves bowed undulatingly to the final passage of the plow.

His oats fields, in the meantime, had flourished, and were fully headed by the end of June. There had been plenty of sunshine and rain, so that even on the eroded knolls the growth was good. Hot and windy July days, when the bowed corn stood firmly rooted but when the oats fields traveled unceasingly, brought ripening tints first to the knolls and then to the low spots. Some of the farmers began the harvest. But the elderly man restrained himself.

He waited two days, and then that night a bad storm rolled up from the northwest. Dawn showed his oats fields flattened to the ground.

And the elderly man looked at his flattened fields and said, "The weather gave me a bad break. Now I am in for it."

And so he began cutting the grain all one way—harvesting from one side only instead of driving around the field and harvesting from four. Always on reaching the end of the field he would turn and come back empty, his binder out of gear and silent.

And even to harvest from this one side he was obliged to tilt the binder to the very earth, so that the sickle might slip under the flattened grain and lift it to the platform. Old cornstalks clogged the sickles and fouled the canvases. "The old man is shaving down the hills," laughed the neighbors.

And so the travail went on, swath by swath, and made all the more irksome by the knowledge that four days would be required to accomplish what ordinarily could be accomplished in one. A heat wave struck; the great cornfields shimmered; rabbits sought the cool comfort of dry tile drains, and one day when the elderly man came to the field after the noonday meal and sat down on the iron seat of the binder he jumped up as though he had sat on a red-hot stove.

The heat continued, day after day. The horses, their bellies running with sweat, needed frequent rests. Rust developed in the neglected grain and so rose up and enclosed the flailing binder that the elderly man, from his seat, saw the world as in a reddish haze. The work crawled, and soon the uncut grain, overripe and rattle-dry, began to shed its kernels, which dropped to the ground and were lost to the harvest.

And at last the elderly man himself grew dizzy with the rust and the heat. He threw the binder out of gear and drove over to a fence, where he crawled into the shade of tall marsh elders which grew in the fence-line and which swayed quiescently to every breeze. With a sheaf for a pillow, he relaxed on the cool earth. But the fence-line underbrush was alive with vicious flies, which bit deep, and presently the elderly man arose, deciding that he preferred the rust and the sun. Emerging from the elders, he was surprised to see a car in the field. It was Mr. Sibrel, the landlord.

"Sitting in the shade, eh?" growled Mr. Sibrel by way of greeting. "It's no wonder that you can't get your grain harvested!"

"I'm doing the best I can," said the elderly man; "you know what a handicap it is to have to cut the grain one way."

"What were you doing those first two days?" snarled Mr. Sibrel. "You started two days later than everybody else! None of the neighbors had to cut their grain one way!"

"I waited two days because I thought the oats was still too green. Oats cut green is inclined to be chaffy, you know that. I waited two days, as I say, but the weather was against me."

"The weather was against you, eh?" sputtered Mr. Sibrel; "rats! look at the oats that's fallen to the ground!—ten bushels to the acre! How'll I get my share, eh? Green oats is chaffy, eh?"

"Say you, listen!" said the elderly man; "I've done the best I could! No man can guess right all the time. I guessed right on my alfalfa, and I guessed right on my corn. Look at that corn over there!—if I do say it myself, it's a perfect stand!"

"A perfect stand, eh? Well, we're not talking about corn, we're talking about this oats! A perfect stand, eh? Rats, rats, rats!" Mr. Sibrel's face was utterly distorted. On his forehead the veins stod out like pencils. He thrust his face close upon his listener and thumped a fist vigorously on his chest.

Suddenly the elderly man's shoulders sagged. "Well," he said at last, "I guess this is the toss-up."

"The what?" roared Mr. Sibrel, his face purple. "The what? You're through! You're through! Hunt yourself another farm! You—! You—!" And Mr. Sibrel, choking, turned and left.

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THE IRISH MELODIST

By PADRAIC COLUM

BY A COINCIDENCE which is perhaps unfortunate for the sales of one or the other of them, two books on Thomas Moore have appeared in the same month. Each is admirably written, each gives a higher rating to Moore as a poet than has been the fashion to give him, each pays a warm tribute to his honorableness, disinterestedness, kindliness, devotion to his country. Dealing knowledgeably with a delightful personality and an important period and adding distinctly to our knowledge of both person and period, these two books are exceptionally interesting biographies. If I am asked which a reader should buy I should say both: "The Minstrel Boy: A Portrait of Tom Moore," by L. A. G. Strong (Knopf), and "The Harp That Once: Tom Moore and the Regency," by Howard Mumford Jones (Holt) supplement each other.

L. A. G. Strong is concerned with giving a portrait of Moore, rendering him with intimacy and warmth and making us know him through our affections. Howard Mumford Jones is concerned with treating him as the earliest, and, in some respects, the most completely realized of the romantic poets in English. His public career rather than his intimate life appeals to him. And so, while "The Minstrel Boy" is an appropriate title for Strong's biography, "The Harp That Once" is not so appropriate for Jones's: in this book it is the Regency man of letters, not the Irish melodist, who has the center of the stage.

L. A. G. Strong gets his biography going with:

> Aungier Street, Dublin, is a continuation of St. George Street, which leads southward out of Dame Street at a right angle; and there in number 12, on 27th May, 1779, Tom Moore was born.

Howard Mumford Jones, with the object of situating Moore in a world in which one order is giving place to another, begins with items in the Dublin newspapers of May 29, 1779, in which there is no mention of a birth over a provision-dealer's store in Aungier Street, and then gives us the events significant of the changing times.

> A lonely, shrunken, bright-eyed old man of sixty-seven, his dogs his dearest friends, Frederick the Great found time to inform the Prussian Royal Academy in 1778 that he had searched seventeen centuries to find a man of talents equal to Voltaire's. . . . Martha Washington left camp in May because her husband's campaign was about to open. . . . Around the rising star of Louis XVI a little group of energetic French officials was doing what neither the Grand Monarque nor Napoleon could do—humiliating the British on land and sea.

And this brings the writer to the social and political conditions in the Ireland into which Moore was born. To Howard Mumford Jones that Ireland is a province with a grievance; to L. A. G. Strong it is an emerging but star-crossed nation. However, it is Howard Mumford Jones who gives us the fullest account of Moore as a political combatant: while L. A. G. Strong merely mentions the pamphlet that came out of Moore's confrontation with the dire facts of Irish tenant life, "Captain Rock, or the Memoirs of an Irish Chieftain," Howard Mumford Jones has a good deal to say about it as he has a good deal to say about Moore's other manifestoes, social and theological. I am glad he pays tribute to the vigor and irony of this pamphlet, and I am glad that he notes that it had some social effect; it led to a surface amelioration in the life of Irish tenants, a life that had not changed for the better since Swift wrote his "Modest Proposal."

L. A. G. Strong's deepest feeling is for Moore the minstrel, and his most informing and enthusiastic chapter is the one on Moore as a song-writer. His comment on "I saw from the beach," for example, is revelatory of that art of his which is on the border-line of music and poetry:

> First of all, his lines have an astonishing forward flow, an impulse running right through from the first word to the last. The placing of the consonants at the accented parts is beyond praise. "Shining," at the end of the first line—Moore was very fond of a breath-attack to brighten the last important vowel in the phrase, when the lungs might be getting empty—"gloriously," with the slight delay of the double consonant, the pictorial vigor of the word, opening into the ring and brightness of the rising "on"; the supreme aptness of "declining," which so naturally, and again so pictorially, comprehends the awkward little run of notes: when a singer finds this sort of thing, he thanks God, and gets on with his singing.

L. A. G. Strong and Howard Mumford Jones say substantially the same thing when they speak about Moore's first publications. They recognize that they are not the mere "effusions" of a poetical youth and they both pay tribute to their originality. Speaking of the translations of the "Odes of Anacreon," Howard Mumford Jones says: "Moore's historic mission was to restore music to English verse as the romantics understood verbal music. . . . There had been nothing like this since the seventeenth century. Readers found it strange, intoxicating and sweet." And of the "Poems of Thomas Little," L. A. G. Strong says: "Mr. Little had no use for the eighteenth century.

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For once he was ahead of his time." He notes that Moore had brought back a note "which had been dumb in English poetry for a long time: since the days of Rochester and Sedley, from whom Moore, assiduous in Marsh's Library, had caught it."

Thomas Moore was a very industrious and very versatile literary man; he produced quite an array of professional work in prose of which three biographies, those of Sheridan, of Lord Byron, and of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, are the most important.

Now as to the value of two of these biographies L. A. G. Strong and Howard Mumford Jones are at variance. Moore's "Life of Byron," declares Howard Mumford Jones, "despite the incessant controversies of the Byron scholars . . . remains one of the four or five great literary biographies of the English language." L. A. G. Strong will only commit himself to: "It has solid and enduring merits, and the biographer nowhere comes between the reader and his subject." The "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," which Moore began before he had quite finished the Byron Life, is warmly praised by L. A. G. Strong: "The name of Fitzgerald rekindled all the patriotic enthusiasm of his boyhood. . . . He recaptured the spirit that had inspired the Melodies, but with the benefits of a lifetime of experience. The memory of Emmett gleamed once more, and he paid tribute to the idols of his youth." Howard Mumford Jones merely commits himself to: "The tone is dignified and sympathetic."

Both agree about the "Life of Sheridan." "It is as if Moore had described all the circumference of Sheridan's life without ever getting at the center," says L. A. G. Strong. And Howard Mumford Jones says no more than: "If he wrote a book which all students of Sheridan must consult, he did not succeed in writing a biography which has lived in its own right." Moore did not know how to write biography until he got through with Sheridan: the material he had in hand in Byron's case, his own willingess to forego the vanity of sole authorship, permitted him to give a new turn to biography by using the "letters and journal" method.

As a prose-writer Thomas Moore lives by the "Life of Byron," and L. A. G. Strong does not put the proper value on it. On the other hand Howard Mumford Jones underestimates the "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald": he is not thrilled as L. A. G. Strong is thrilled by "all that delirium of the brave" which comes to a reader nurtured on the Irish national tradition with the mention of Robert Emmett and Edward Fitzgerald as L. A. G. Strong is. To him, as to any outside reader, that Life is an "account of a rash and high-minded youth, full of the ardors of the French Revolution, who engaged in an enterprise fore-doomed to failure, and whose life, even when badly told, must awaken pity." There are overtones in Moore's career which Howard Mumford Jones cannot register.

Each of the present biographers strive with success to break down the legend of Moore as the prettifier, as the rococo decorator. And yet in each of the biographies there is a passage where the legend again shows itself. "The next page," writes Howard Mumford Jones about the original issue of the first part of the Irish Melodies, "an even more intricate flourish of scrolls, contains a dedication 'To the Nobility and Gentry of Ireland,' for this is folk music for the upper classes." But if by folk music one means a music originating with a peasantry, the music that Moore wrote his songs to was never folk music: in his time it was the possession of the harpers who were a survival of a guild whose audience before the dispersal of the seventeenth century was precisely "the Nobility and Gentry of Ireland": Moore was not trying to deck out a folk art for the upper classes: as far as the melodies were concerned they had as much right to be in the salon of the Duke of Leinster as in the cabins of any of his tenants. And L. A. G. Strong writes, "He dressed things up in verse, prettified them, adorned them with 'fancy.'" But the instance he gives of this tendency of Moore (which I admit) is not valid. "Munster became 'Mononia,' and Wicklow had to yield the adjective 'Lagenian.'" But "Munster" and "Leinster" are Scandinavian forms of the Irish "Muhan" and "Leighan": Moore's Latinized forms are at least as near to the originals as the forms in common use. These are small points, but they show how hard it is to down the legend of Moore as the rococo decorator.

Thomas Moore was the first in English-speaking Ireland to put himself forward as an Irish national writer; he was the first spokesman of the emerging Catholic community. Like many another who expressed something of the national tradition, he lived and published in England. He hated the union between Great Britain and Ireland and the means and the instrument by which it was brought about; as regards world-policy, however, he was pro-British, and would have been dismayed at the notion of Ireland getting outside the British orbit. He announced himself as a Catholic but not a Papist—by that he meant that he would like to have the Catholic Church in Ireland national as the Gallican Church was; it was probably this position of his that made for his breach with O'Connell. Ireland would be ungrateful if she did not acknowledge how much his devotion effected, both as regards Catholic Emancipation and the revival of the Irish spirit: no writer at the time could have done more than Moore did for both of these causes.

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To appraise certain of his lyrics is difficult, for they are so associated with deeply loved music that their intrinsic character is not apparent. As verse the bulk is mediocre. Moore was concerned with writing words that would take the shape and keep the rhythm of a tune, and not with expressing a mood that was deeply personal. But many times he transcended the limit of the song-writer's art and wrote poetry: "At the mid-hour of night when stars are weeping I fly" is, no matter from what side we regard it, a memorable lyric; "The Harp that once through Tara's Halls" is not only a great song, but a poem that brings to us something that is very rare in poetry, the dignity of a nation's utterance; a fine poem, too, is "Silent O Moyle," with its unique assonantal music, and so is the one that neither of the biographers mentions, "How oft the banshee cried"; if the three poems on Robert Emmett's fate—"O breathe not his name," "When he who adores thee," "She is far from the land"—were printed together we would see that Moore has written a noble threnody.

Both L. A. G. Strong and Howard Mumford Jones recognize in him an innovator in verse: he gave a lead both to Byron and Shelley, Howard Mumford Jones shows us, and he anticipated many of the effects of present-day "Celtic" poetry. However, I cannot agree that "Oh had we some bright little isle of our own" is an earlier "I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree," or that "A siren of old who sung under the sea," is related in any way to a poem of A.E.'s. Moore cheats our eyes, L. A. G. Strong tells us; he does not give us any visual delight. This is true, but not invariably true. I find delight for the eye in:

> Our rocks are rough, but smiling there
> The acacia waves her yellow hair,
> Lonely and sweet, nor loved the less
> For flowering in the wilderness.
>
> Our sands are bare, but down their slope
> The silvery-footed antelope
> As gracefully and gaily springs
> As o'er the marble courts of kings.

He was the first poet of a national awakening; he fell heir to the music of his country, to the curiosity about Celtic past that MacPherson had stirred; to the romantic movement with its interest in national expression. His devotion to the Irish cause gave strength to part of his work. Moore's achievement should have been eclipsed in the generation that followed his or the generation after by a poet who would be more definitely Irish, who could bring into the new national expression the intensity of Gaelic feeling. But the dire conditions of the country prevented the emergence of such a poet from the only class that could have given him the proper endowment, the disinherited Catholic peasantry. "Who is your national poet?" a French writer was asked. "Victor Hugo, alas," was his reply. Until the interrupted national awakening—the interruption was due to the famine of '47—was renewed in the 'nineties an Irish writer might have replied to such a query, "Thomas Moore, alas." Moore himself, who was able to recognize the national poet when he saw him in the person of Robert Burns, would have understood the "alas."

CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM

By MARTIN LYNCH

THERE is a general tendency today to condemn unequivocally what is termed "Communism." This spirit manifests itself in two ways: (1) utter condemnation of Bolshevism, which is right; (2) the upholding of private property as the foundation of an ideal state, which is wrong.

We are perfectly right in condemning Bolshevism. For any system which sanctions the control of all property in the hands of a few is pure despotism. But we are wrong in condemning communism, for the term cannot rightly be applied to Bolshevism at all.

This is the point we are making: Bolshevism is not communism. In Bolshevism we have the control of property in the hands of a few. Somebody owns in Bolshevism; namely, the rulers. In communism nobody owns. A system of anarchy some may call it but we are speaking ideally and an ideal system would be everyone living in the perfect harmony of love with everyone else, with no rulers.

So much for the first point. Now for the second: the upholding of private property as the foundation of an ideal state. Before we go further, notice the wording of this thesis. The upholding of private property as the foundation of an *ideal state*. In order to allow my point to evolve in logical order, I will first consider certain aspects of an ideal state, then apply my considerations to reality.

Communism is an ideal state. Its chief note is denial of one's own natural rights and hence, a giving up of one's right to private property. Such is the life that has been carried out so successfully for centuries in monasteries, religious orders and convents of various kinds. Indeed, in the Catholic Church alone has communism been practised. Let's consider a religious community, it is typical of what an ideal state of communism would be.

A religious community is a society made up of persons of the same sex who are dedicated to the same ideal. As a result of the similarity of their ideal there is a mutual love which manifests itself in a sharing of earthly goods. This is communism. It is a Christian thing, an intellectual appreciation of a common goal: the eternal happiness of the next world. When one realizes that things of this world "lead but to the grave," there is, as a logical consequent, an abnegation of worldly things. One lives

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in rather complete harmony with his fellow man, because he does not care for gain and possession which are the two greatest factors causing disturbance in this world.

The question may be asked, "What about all the property of this world? Isn't it to be used at all?" The answer is that there will be an equality of use. Each will have something, but all the while realizing that it isn't his; that it is only his to use. Everybody will have in equal amounts but each will give up his share if a fellow man is, through some natural disturbance, without anything.

The Christian gospel of love is the essence of the perfect state of communism. Love, the philosophers tell us, resides in the will. And so, as in the religious community, this mutual sharing is voluntary. It is a perfection of free will. For God gave us free will, not to cheat our neighbor but to help him. If by free will we are to gain eternal life, then it is the perfection of that free will to perform acts of charity in this life in order that we may obtain that everlasting happiness. For it is told us that only through good works may we enter heaven.

Now a word as to how this state of communism is to be realized if it is to be realized at all. The only way is through education. Here the burden is thrown on the Catholic school. Secular education has not got the truth. The Catholic Church has.

The Catholic school would have to impress more firmly on its pupils the doctrine of love. And not only teach the doctrine but impress upon the pupils its application to every-day life. This is a common fault in education. We dole out, in the words of one writer, "well-wrapped packets of learning." The trouble is the students never know what to do with the knowledge. Christ said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." So what? This is the query of most students. They fail to see how it can be applied.

They must be taught that the Catholic doctrine of love is a living, vital thing. It is as much a part of their existence as earning their daily bread. Indeed, it is the only part of their existence. It is to earning their daily bread as eternal happiness is the ephemeral happiness of this world.

If only fellows could realize that life does not consist in going out to work every morning and coming home and listening to the radio! Life on this earth is merely a preparation. What a staggering reality is this! Religion is the only thing that means anything. The doctrine of love of one's neighbor is the central doctrine of the Catholic Church. It goes hand in hand with the doctrine of love of God.

Once people have realized this let them apply it. What does love of one's neighbor consist in? It consists in acts of charity. What are acts of charity? Acts of charity are free unsolicited donations of one's own means to help another. These means are manifold. One can help his neighbor by praying for him. This is an act of charity.

One can help him by giving one's earthly goods. This is the type we are concerned with here particularly, although in a perfect state all types will manifest themselves. This is the essence of a perfect state, the giving of one's goods through a motive of love. The more we give, the happier everyone will be and the nearer we will approach to the perfect state of communism.

This is all the perfect state consists in. It is very simple. Education and action following that education.

Now the question arises: Can this state ever be realized? As such, no. But we can approach it. The reason it cannot be realized as such, lies in man's sexual appetite. Man has a natural affinity for woman and marriage. Hence, in order to protect his family, he will have to work to maintain them in existence. He will seek to insure his own private property against outside aggression. He will even seek gain to give his family better than other families.

And this is perfectly natural. In justice, every man has his right to private property. But this is where charity comes in. Let this man, instead of seeking for gain, conserve enough for his own use but let him give the surplus to someone else instead of storing it away.

And thus we could approach the ideal state. Teach the doctrine of giving. Perhaps if man had no sexual appetite, we could realize the perfect state here. But that is impossible, man being constituted as he is.

But let's not lose heart because of this. We can approach the ideal state and attain the maximum amount of happiness allowed us in this world. The more we give the happier we will be and the happier our neighbor will be. It matters not about an extensive hierarchy of rulers or sweeping new governmental system.

An ideal state does not consist in externals. It must come from within man himself. The ideal state, I feel, can be approached most easily in a democratic form of government. Fascism and Bolshevism are wrong philosophically. Democracy is the form of government which takes into account most accurately man's nature, what he is and what he is capable of.

The approaching to this ideal state of communism isn't as difficult as would first appear. If we labor through our schools diligently, we can perhaps attain our objective within a few generations. But man and his passions have always to be taken into consideration. That's where the trouble lies. There's the rub. It's our only barrier to an ideal state.

To One Gallant in Defeat

Now let the pulse of aspiration sleep
A little while, and let the heart have rest.
The dream you undertook and tried to keep
Lies broken by betrayal and a jest.
Somehow a word went truant at the test
While ambush lurked upon the hazard's steep.
Not yours be the reproach. Not in your breast
Let the dull bitterness of blame be deep.
Better the dared endeavor than the prize!
Nobler the served ideal than the crown!
Better defeat where honor's ensign flies
Than sullied triumph with that standard down.
So rest; then rise anew and stand restored.
There will be trophies worthy of your sword.

CLIFFORD J. LAUBE.

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WHAT DO THEY THINK OF MUSSOLINI?

By CATHERINE BRADSHAW

FOR EVERYONE who returns from Europe in general, or from one country in particular, the same question eventually arises: What do they think of Mussolini? Such a man naturally has either strong enemies or equally strong partizans: it is impossible to be indifferent in reaction to him; and consequently answers in regard to current opinions of Mussolini are difficult to give.

There can be little doubt but that the man is building legends around himself. His strong and magnetic personality, while it no doubt developed from an original and inherent seed, has grown into its present magnetism only through nurturing and care. It is not amiss, I venture to say, to assume that Mussolini sees himself as another Augustus, and quite frankly a curious parallelism exists between the two men, a parallelism which loses nothing at the hands of the present Duce, a man thoroughly familiar with ancient history. Both men in the early years of life have experienced unrest and struggle. Augustus at the age of eighteen found himself the head of veteran troops and forced to battle as the adopted son of Julius Caesar. Mussolini in his youth found himself at odds with Socialists, Marxists, Progressives, Conservatives—in fact, with everyone. He found himself an undesirable citizen in countries which would now give him honorary citizenship. He was forced to spend the nights out of doors because he had no other place. He found himself imprisoned, an outlaw.

But from all of this as well as from omniverous reading Benito Mussolini arrived at a philosophy, a social and economic philosophy originally that of D'Annunzio, but today what we might almost call the soul of Mussolini. From the very bottom he has reached the highest rung in Italy. The question is: Will he strive for the highest rung in the world?

Three years ago it was my privilege to spend a year in Italy in close contact with Italians. During that time I heard nothing in the line of criticism against Mussolini. In fact, his name seldom entered the conversation. Only the rash outspoken American was bold enough to voice a slightly unfavorable opinion, and even that occurred infrequently rather than frequently. The régime was at least a good silencer; those daring to present any criticism were promptly exiled or disposed of in some other efficient manner.

After the absence of almost three years, my astonishment scarcely knew bounds when I heard open and highly unfavorable criticism of Mussolini along with strong pro-Fascist propaganda. Naturally there is still a certain hesitance on the whole—one does not cast aside the conventions of a lifetime in a few weeks or even in a few months. But there is a frankly anti-Mussolini group of Italians; some are openly against the man, boldly attacking him and his policies. These are the men who generally constitute the groups mentioned in various papers when we read a notice to the effect that nineteen or twenty anti-Fascist intellectuals have been imprisoned or exiled.

But there is another group which seems to me to be more dangerous to the existence of the régime: these are the people who in confidence voice the growing dissatisfaction with the hardships in Italy, people who have no fine logical premises on which to stand but who advance the age-old universal cry: Why should I suffer for someone else? Why should I be deprived of all the pleasures in life in order that others may enjoy themselves in the highest degree? Sooner or later these people are heard, and sooner or later they act. These are the people from whom arise the seed which must develop into good Fascist or anti-Fascist harvest. Today in more or less confidence they talk from overburdened hearts. Their sons have been sent to Ethiopia either as soldiers or as colonists. Many who went down as soldiers have never returned; many returned broken in health and spirit; and many there are who will never erase the horrible experiences through which they passed. Now, Italy is colonizing her new addition, and many Italians are sent or go voluntarily to this "land of plenty." Some go for adventure, others for the greatly advertised wealth, and many go because they have no work in Italy and are starving. Some remain, but many return after a short time: "I would rather starve in Italy than suffer in Ethiopia."

The Italians on the whole are still proud of the Great War in Ethiopia, and, with the exception of those who know from actual experience, still believe that Ethiopia is the Italian land of flowing mead and honey. But they are beginning to feel the result of the war. Wool is practically non-existent; iron is exorbitant. Add to this the growing lack of commodities due to the fact that Italy must supply Spain. From June until September the price of living tripled in Rome, and outside this city prices were even higher. Huge amounts of foodstuffs are exported to Spain—and the winter fruit is being destroyed by fruit-rot. Taxes have increased, but salaries, as is the rule, have remained constant. Everywhere one hears the question: Why should our young men die in Spain for another country? Why should we be deprived of even the necessities of life in order to send them to foreigners? Why should we pay exorbitant taxes brought about by war?

Then openly, in contradistinction to this agitation, we hear: England is in her decadence. At one time she dictated terms to the world, but now Mussolini dictates, and the world listens. No country dares to oppose him. The empire is spreading again throughout the world as Italy comes again into her rightful heritage. Mussolini and the Italian Empire—Augustus and the Roman Empire.

We wonder. Can Mussolini romanize the Italians divided for all practical purposes into two camps? Can he unite these people who are today no longer a people of one blood, as the ancient Romans, but rather a people oriental in the south of the peninsula, cosmopolitan in the central part, and European in the norths? The time for the show-down draws near: already the dice rattle, while Italy and the world stand by with bated breath.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—A Workers' School sponsored by the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists with the active assistance of Fordham University, opened November 15. It is open to all bona fide trade unionists regardless of creed, and tuition is free; more than sixty union workers have registered. Classes are held at the Fordham downtown branch. The faculty includes Reverend John P. Boland, chairman of the New York State Labor Relations Board; Reverend John Monaghan of Cathedral College, A.C.T.U. chaplain; Reverend Ignatius Cox, S.J., of Fordham; and Bernard J. O'Connell, New York attorney. * * * Four Chinese bishops are directing the work of the Chinese Catholic War Relief Association of Hankow, and they have addressed an appeal couched in seven different languages to the bishops throughout the world. Bandits in the Province of Hopei recently kidnaped a Vincentian missionary bishop and eight priests, French, Dutch, Austrian, Czech and Portuguese. * * * KAP, the Polish Catholic Press Agency, is celebrating its tenth anniversary. A morning edition carries news from home and foreign correspondents; the evening releases issue news received by cable. More than 90 percent of the Polish press subscribe. * * * At the seventh annual convention of the Mobile Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Bishop Thomas J. Toolen declared that the plight of the Southern sharecropper is "worse than that of the Negroes." Bishop Toolen commended the plan to establish a Catholic cooperative farm in southern Alabama. * * * Most Reverend Gabriel Breynat, O.M.I., Vicar-Apostolic of Mackenzie, Canadian Northwest, arrived in New York from Edmonton, Alberta, after an eleven-hour flight. "The Bishop of the Wind," who is seventy years old, covers his territory of 600,000 square miles, including Arctic districts, by boat and plane.

The Nation.—During its first regular days of work Congress became tied up in various purposes, indicating that something much nearer the bloc system will govern its activities than at any time during the past five years. The Senate refused to handle the executive reorganization bill while waiting for the farm measure, entering instead a filibuster on the anti-lynching bill. Senator Harrison of the Senate Finance Committee arrived in Washington indicating his desire to aid business by tax revision. The contest between the President's four-point program as outlined in his message and Congress's independent and indefinite business aid program did not, however, become clarified. * * * Senators La Follette and Capper began pushing two constitutional amendments concerning war. One would define more closely the presidential powers of involving the country in war near home, keeping him from leading us into any undeclared warfare. Congress would not be permitted to lead the nation into overseas war without holding a referendum asking whether we should declare war, and, secondly, whether we should have conscription. * * * On November 15, a Cooperative Book Club started operations. The Book Co-op will begin by buying books of all types for its members and next spring will start a monthly book selection plan. Books will be sold at market prices and dividends will be returned according to the amount purchased. * * * Armistice Day celebrations were held throughout the nation and in many of the other countries of the world. After attending the ceremonies at Arlington, President Roosevelt helped in starting off the annual roll-call of the American Red Cross. * * * Secretary Morgenthau, in a speech going over the hopes and possibilities of balancing the budget, suggested two definite and two vague places where federal expenses might be cut. He called for definite reduction in highway and public works outlays, and spoke indefinitely and conditionally of cuts in aid to the unemployed and farmers.

The Wide World.—The United States accepted the invitation of President Stenio Vincent of Haiti to join with Mexico and Cuba in mediating the dispute between Haiti and the Dominican Republic over the alleged massacre of Haitians on Dominican soil. * * * The Soviet Ambassador informed the London non-intervention committee that his government had agreed to grant belligerent rights to Nationalist and Loyalist forces in Spain as soon as a "substantial" number of volunteers had been withdrawn. Russia had previously refused even to consider granting belligerent rights until "the last volunteer" had left Spain. * * * Nationalist headquarters at Salamanca declared Japan would recognize General Franco's régime on November 25, the first anniversary of the German-Japanese anti-Comintern treaty. * * * Great Britain appointed Sir Robert Hodgson as commercial agent to watch over trade matters in Nationalist Spain. * * * Viscount Halifax, Britain's Lord President of the Council, left London to confer with Chancellor Hitler at Berchtesgaden. King Leopold of Belgium was welcomed in London by King George VI. * * * Five members of the grand-ducal family of Hesse bei Rhein were killed in an airplane crash near Ostend, Belgium. * * * Restrictions on the sale of liquor have been imposed in Moscow and Leningrad. White Russia was subjected to the second purge in five months. Leading Finnish and Estonian Communist organizations in Leningrad were destroyed. * * * Seven persons were killed and fourteen injured in renewed rioting between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

* * * *

China Weakens.—The fall of Shanghai appears to be far more serious to the Chinese cause than was at first supposed. The vision of a large Chinese army well entrenched for the winter in carefully prepared lines fifty miles west of Shanghai seems to be an illusion. Between Nanking and the point now reached by the Japanese forces

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lie over a hundred miles of the most difficult terrain—mountains, various bodies of water and ground so soggy that trenches cannot be over four feet deep—but various government administrative bodies are already moving to the widely scattered cities of Chungking, Hankow and Changsa, with others contemplating removal to Loyang and Yunnan. This move was announced as preferable to a panicky, last-minute flight. The great fear is that Japanese gunboats will soon be close enough to shell the capital from the Yangtse River. Meanwhile in the North, after the expiration of a 30-day ultimatum, Japanese troops are again on the march in Shantung and are at the gates of Tsinan, General Han's capital, as we go to press. Foreign observers are beginning to sense impending Chinese collapse. Latest figures indicate that the war has caused 800,000 Chinese casualties, more than half of them deaths. Shanghai has the appalling total of more than 1,000,000 destitute refugees.

Mexico and Revolution.—New developments are continually popping south of the Rio Grande. When an official from Chile, one of the few Latin-American nations counted as Leftist, addressed the Mexican Chamber of Deputies as a guest of the National Revolutionary party, he mingled brickbats for Mexican society, the clergy, the press, reaction and Fascism generally with bouquets for President Cardenas. The press and society were startled. According to Frank Kluckhohn's persuasive analysis in the New York *Times,* nationalism rather than socialism or communism inspires the Mexicanization of industry. By his policy of division of large estates among the peasants and high wages for the industrial workers, President Cardenas has been aiming at capitalism for all rather than socialism. He is trying to keep farm and industrial workers apart, in opposition to one of the two important genuine Marxists in Mexico, Lombardo Toledano, chief of National Workers Confederation, instigator of a farm-labor united front. Mr. Cardenas has the support of the official bureaucracy and wields considerable power through government control of communal farms. Following the demand of a showdown on the oil wage controversy by American and British oil companies, President Cardenas signed a promise providing for concession of the remainder of the proven Pozarica oil field to the Mexican Eagle Oil Company, a subsidiary of British Royal Dutch Shell. This will give the British access to all of the second richest fields in the world in return for 15 to 35 percent of the oil drilled. As a result reserves in the Bank of Mexico rose again after a long and serious recession. Various British and German firms are offering large loans for the construction of refineries, and Mexico will be less dependent on the silver purchases of the United States.

Labor.—The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, an A. F. of L. affiliate, went to court in New York charging the National Labor Relations Board had voided a legal contract it had with the Consolidated Edison Company. While this action was taking place, the C.I.O. union in the field demanded an election to prove it should be the bargaining agent with the Edison Company. Their charge is that the A. F. of L. union is a "stooge" for the company and illegally recruited and set up. Mrs. Elinore M. Herrick, head of the N.L.R.B. in the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut region, issued an elaborately documented defense of the board, designed to prove its impartiality in general and to keep it from being injured in its operations by charges brought against it. * * * Mr. James H. Rand, president of Remington Rand, and Pearl A. Bergoff, head of the notorious "industrial service" company, were on trial for disobeying the Byrnes Act, which prohibits the transportation of strikebreakers with the aim of interfering with peaceful picketing. The question centered upon was whether or not the company was genuinely planning to dismantle its struck plant and if the "millwrights" imported for that purpose were real millwrights or simply strikebreakers and thugs. * * * The General Motors Corporation rejected the terms offered it by the United Automobile Workers Union for a new agreement and sent back to the locals its own terms, which were in turn rejected. If no new agreement is signed between the union and the company, the present one continues in effect until one party gives sixty days notice of its intention to end it.

Ramsay MacDonald.—J. Ramsay MacDonald, who formed Labor governments in Great Britain in 1924 and 1929, and a National government in 1931, died at sea, November 9. Born at Lossiemouth, Scotland, in 1866, the son of a laborer, MacDonald started out to be a teacher. He decided to go to London, however, and became a clerk in a warehouse, and then almost immediately secretary to a member of Parliament. In 1894, the joined the Fabian Socialists and soon became identified with the Independent Labor party. As one of its intellectual leaders, MacDonald became secretary of the Labor party in 1900, and in 1906, chairman. During this period he wrote books and pamphlets, expressing doctrines of Fabian gradualistic socialism. In 1906, he entered Parliament, and was parliamentary leader of his party from 1911 to 1914. In that year he lost his leadership through his pacifism, and he was not returned in the next election, in 1918. Four years later he was reestablished, and in 1924, when the Cabinet passed from under Bonar Law to Stanley Baldwin, and when Asquith threw the Liberals from the Conservatives to the Labor party, MacDonald formed the first Labor government in English history. This coalition government fell after nine months and in the following "Zinovieff letter" election the Labor party lost out. Mr. MacDonald's disapproval of the general strike in 1926 antagonized the more radical members of the labor movement, while his passive acceptance of it did him no good with the conservatives, but by 1929, when the Labor party again obtained most seats in Parliament, MacDonald was again leader and he formed his second government. In 1931, with England at the depth of the depression, he called for a balanced budget with a consequent cut in the dole, and this split the Labor party seriously. A National government was formed, with MacDonald Prime Minister, but with the initiative believed to be with the Conservatives. In 1935, after George V's

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Jubilee, Stanley Baldwin succeeded MacDonald, and this spring J. Ramsay MacDonald completely retired from public life, refusing an earldom from the king.

Mayors' Conference.—Mayor La Guardia, president of the United States Conference of Mayors, asserted at the opening of the conference's annual three-day session in Washington that there had been no definite improvement in the unemployment situation in the cities and expressed the belief that a federal deficiency appropriation would be necessary if the present business recession continued. He urged that a formula for solving the problem of relief for employables be worked out with Harry L. Hopkins, Works Progress Administrator, and suggested a federal system for uniformity of taxes to help spread the relief burden. Mayor Shaw of Los Angeles introduced a resolution calling upon Congress to create a permanent program for public-owned airports and for federal aid to complete and expand municipal airports that were not finished or were inadequate. J. Warren Madden, chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, charged that in some cities the new labor law was being frustrated with the "connivance of the Mayor and other officials who are sworn to uphold the law." The federal government, he concluded, "has guaranteed to working people in important enterprises the right to have unions if they want them. Among the results should be a more intelligent and self-respecting citizenry, a greater equality of bargaining power, and the substitution of the procedure of the conference table for the strike and lockout."

Utilities.—The private utilities announced to the country that they had a delayed construction program of from $2,500,000,000 to $5,000,000,000 waiting until the government should cease "persecuting" them and establish a peace. President Roosevelt said he would be glad to cooperate with the power companies if they revised their rate basis from the present "cost of reproduction" to one of "prudent investment," or "historical cost of properties." These gestures were soon overshadowed by a great suit brought by eighteen power companies in the Tennessee Valley against the TVA. Before one of the new three-judge federal courts established by the Judicial Reform Act, which can pass constitutional questions on to the Supreme Court with new speed, the companies brought "a suit for anticipatory relief against threatened irreparable damage, against which we believe we are entitled to an injunction." Counsels for the companies, led by Newton D. Baker, asserted that the basic charge is that the power program of the TVA is primary in its activities, and that the navigation and flood control activities are simply a sham disguising that fact. Other charges were that the private companies were carrying out their work with great success in every way, that the TVA injures them with its competition, that it is trying to "substitute federal for state control of public ownership and regulation of rates, both an invasion of state rights." The TVA claims that the private companies have been inadequate in the performance of all duties and services and that the electric program of the Authority is integral with the general program of conservation. The only ruling so far issued by the Supreme Court governing the constitutionality of TVA was in the Ashwander case, where it simply upheld the right of the government to sell the power generated at Wilson Dam, not expressing any opinion on the general aspect of the problem.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—A new Committee on Religion and Health, composed of ministers and physicians, has been formed by the Federal Council of Churches. Dr. Howard Chandler Robbins, professor of pastoral theology at the General Theological Seminary, is chairman of the committee. This gathering will give careful study to the possibilities of helpful cooperation between religious workers and specialists in the field of mental hygiene and psychiatry. In creating the committee, the Federal Council said, "It is recognized that many psychiatrists have little appreciation of the significance of religion for the inner life and that many ministers have little understanding of the difficulties which make it necessary for people to go to the psychiatrist." * * * The World Alliance for International Fellowship through the Churches, in its annual convention in Boston, passed resolutions approving President Roosevelt's Chicago speech, urging application of the neutrality laws only to aggressors, supporting American membership in the International Labor Bureau, and condemning racial enmities. Stating that "the establishment of international peace involves more than the mere avoidance of war," the Alliance urged the formation of a national conscience that "will seek justice rather than fight for privilege." * * * Reports from Fort Wayne, Ind., indicate that the unification of three Methodist denominations having approximately 8,000,000 members in all parts of the world was two-thirds completed.

Nobel Prize.—The 1937 Nobel Prizes for physics, chemistry and literature were awarded in Stockholm, Sweden. The physics prize was divided between Dr. Clinton Joseph Davisson of New York and Professor George Paget Thomson of London for the experimental discovery of interference phenomena when crystals are irradiated with electrons. Professor Thomson's first steps in the scientific field were at Cambridge University, from 1919 to 1922, where he was an examiner in mathematics tripos. Then he went to Aberdeen as professor of natural philosophy. In 1930 he became professor of physics in the Imperial College of Science, London, a post he now occupies. His discovery, which is of great practical importance, concerns the structure of thin metallic surfaces and changes occurring in such surfaces when subjected to different treatments and also concerns internal molecular problems. Dr. Davisson started his career in 1911 as instructor in physics at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pa. In 1917 he joined the research staff of the Bell Laboratories. It was there, in association with Dr. L. H. Germer, that the first experimental proof for one of the most basic concepts of modern physics was completed. Originally propounded in 1924 by Prince Louis-Victor de Broglie of France, this concept revolu-

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tionized the outlook of science on the fundamental nature of the universe. The chemistry prize was also jointly awarded. Professor Walter Horman Haworth of Birmingham, England, and Professor Paul Karrer of Zurich shared it. Dr. Haworth, who is professor of chemistry and director of the Department of Chemistry at Birmingham University, receives his share of the prizes for his researches on carbohydrates and vitamin C. The most complete renaissance that carbohydrates chemistry has undergone in the last decade is credited to a great extent to Professor Haworth's work. His researches made possible large-scale production of vitamin C. The literature prize was awarded to the French writer, Roger Martin du Gard, famous as the author of a series of books entitled, "Les Thibaults," which follows the growth of a typical French family through many years.

Unemployed and Unemployable.—Gwynne A. Prosser of the American Institute of Banking told delegates attending the fourteenth semi-annual convention of the Commercial Education Association that bad manners, bad personality and character traits have lost more jobs for beginners and employees in commercial jobs than lack of ability or mechanical skill. In a survey of employees who were dismissed from 76 firms, 90 percent did not fit their jobs because of poor character traits. A related finding was that promotions depend largely upon general ability. Only 23 percent missed advancement because they lacked mechanical ability while 77 percent either could not or would not improve their personalities for the higher jobs. In New York City, 201,350 or 57 percent of the 349,350 adults receiving aid from the Emergency Relief Bureau and the Department of Public Welfare were classified as unable to meet the employment requirements of private business. The monthly cost of caring for these "unemployables" and their children is about $5,300,000, with more than $500,000 additional required for administration.

Rural Life.—The Reverend Luigi Ligutti was elected president of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference at its annual sessions in Richmond, Va. In setting forth a Catholic agrarian program, the Conference declared that unless the agrarian problem "finds an adequate and immediate solution, the depopulation of our rural parishes will continue, with the twofold effect of draining the lifeblood from the Church in the United States and of hastening the disruption of our national existence." The following proposals were made for a future agrarian program: abolition of land incorporation; rescue of family farms from commercialization; the operation of farms as family units and the fee-simple family basis ownership of land; application of scientific technique to farm operation; investment of money by individuals in long-term loans to farmers; the Christian cooperative; abolition of rural proletarianism; the development of rural social leadership; development of a rural church expansion program; provision of responsible distributed ownership of land to Negroes as well as other racial groups; and the promotion of rural charity.

Home Museum.—On November 16 in New York City, the collection of art of the Jules Bache Foundation was opened to the public. Like the Frick Collection, opened to the public two years ago, Mr. Bache's pictures will be displayed in the home where they were privately gathered by the donor. The home is as little changed as possible from the way it appeared when it was the private residence of the banker. Thus a great sociological interest is added to the artistic, and the building and its decoration become an integral and harmonious part of one of the world's small but great museums. In the ground floor hall where the staircase mounts, hang Italian paintings by Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, Raphael, Signorelli, Cosimo Tura and Titian. In the dining room are English masters. On the second floor are works by Goya, Ghirlandajo, Giovanni Bellini, Fra Filippo Lippi, Titian and Velasquez. There is a paneled room with Dutch paintings by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, Terborch and Van Dyck. There is a French salon with paintings of Watteau, Drouais, Fragonard, Pater, Vigee-Lebrun and Boucher. Another principal room contains German and Flemish works by Durer, David, Dirk Bouts, Van der Weyden and Holbein. There are in the house other paintings and sculpture and objects of art, all displayed without the severity and impersonality of typical museums, showing great artistic accomplishments of the past together with the remarkable taste and immense resources of an eminent New York business man.

Temps Présent.—First copies of a new weekly journal, *Temps Présent,* have just reached Americans who were subscribing to *Sept* when that excellent review of the French Dominican Fathers ceased publication last spring. Somewhat similar to its predecessor in format, the new review, which is now edited solely by laymen, at 62 Rue de Babylone, Paris VIIe, has as its slogan, "Beyond and above all parties." The founders are convinced of the necessity of a review that will discuss the questions of the day "freely and in a Christian spirit." "Devoted to the Church with filial obedience, the Catholics who collaborate on the new weekly are well aware that they commit only themselves, not the hierarchy nor Catholicism, and therefore they can more boldly take a stand, determined in advance to assert nothing that they have not carefully verified, and if it should happen that they are deceived, to truthfully acknowledge their mistake." They believe that, in the face of the mystical fervor with which totalitarians pursue their ends, it is highly important that Catholics bring to bear upon temporal problems "the vivifying force of the Gospels and the Faith." "In affirming the transcendence of Christianity in regard to parties, classes, nations, races, civilizations, in short the whole temporal order, it [*Temps Présent*] will bring to bear upon this order, and everything that concerns man and his life on earth, judgments which are free, committing only ourselves, and as purely Christian as possible." Stanislas Fumet is editor-in-chief and among the collaborators are: Georges Bernanos, Henri Ghéon, Louis Gillet, Jacques Maritain, François Mauriac, Emmanuel Mounier and Maxence Van der Meersch.

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The Play and Screen

Father Malachy's Miracle

THE LOVERS of Bruce Marshall's delightful novel —and who has read it and not loved it?—heard with more than slight trepidation the news that it was being made into a play. One of the most deliciously ironic and yet basically spiritual stories of modern literature, it seemed at first thought singularly unsuited for dramatic treatment. How, for instance, was it possible to project in the theatre what is dramatically the crucial moment of the book, the flying through the air of the "Garden of Eden" cabaret from its place in the center of Edinburgh to the Bass Rock? Well, let me say at once, that as dramatized by Brian Doherty, this feat has been triumphantly accomplished. How, it would be unfair to Mr. Doherty and to Mr. Delos Chappell, the play's producer, to reveal. It is enough to say that the curtain line at the end of the first act, "God Almighty! Seagulls!" is one of the most amusing and incisive curtains in modern playwriting. It shows what a dramatist can accomplish by a single line, an accomplishment which all the scenery in the world would only have bungled. The play like the novel is founded on the idea of a miracle of God, and even the most skilful scenic designer is but a man, and utterly unable with the aid of all his lights and revolving platforms to project a cabaret through the air. That is a miracle only possible to man through the miracle of imagination, and this Mr. Doherty realized magnificently.

Of course no play could contain all the delightful touches of the novel, but Mr. Doherty's dramatization retains the essential atmosphere and characterizations with remarkable skill. We have the gentle, spiritual Father Malachy, who believes that faith can still produce miracles and so triumphantly proves it; the amusing Scottish bishop, a little lazy but full of common sense; the equally amusing and very Irish Father Flaherty; the Italian cardinal, filled with knowledge of the world, understanding that even a miracle must wait for official acceptance; the bishop's bad boy brother; the sceptical Anglican clergyman; and half a dozen other characters, salty and humorous. The acting is on the whole excellent. Al Shean gives a sincere performance of Father Malachy, and even if at times his accent is not exactly that of a Scottish-Irish Benedictine, he projects the simple spirituality of the part. Donald Beddoe as the bishop's brother, Frank Green as the Anglican clergyman, Benedict MacQuarrie as Cardinal Vessena, St. Clair Bayfield as Bishop Gillespie, John Call as Father Flaherty, Ralph Cullinan as Peter, and Margaret Curtis as Peggy McNabb are all admirable, while Worthington Miner has directed the play with great sensitiveness, and Jo Mielziner has designed most admirable sets.

There may be oversensitive Catholics who will object to some of the characterizations, but it is to be hoped these will be few. "Father Malachy's Miracle" is a deeply religious play, and one which is truly Catholic. In a world of the theatre given largely to the flesh, in which the spirit is usually introduced only to be mocked or at least criticized, Mr. Doherty's dramatization of Bruce Marshall's novel is like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and the rock is the rock of faith. It is a play which all Catholics should attend. White lists have small value if our people do not support what is good and noble in the theatre. "Father Malachy's Miracle" is both of these, but it is more. It is fascinatingly written, its men and women are real and vital, its wit is keen, its humor ingratiating. It gives a spiritual message, and is implicit with truth. It is at once very much of this world and yet not of it. But do not let the latter keep you from attending, for it is one of the very few plays in New York which hold the attention to the end, and are at once humorous and poetic. In short it is a play of rare nobility and also a rare good show. It is a play not to be missed. (At the St. James Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Hurricane

"THE HURRICANE" is Charles Nordhoff's and James Norman Hall's successor to their "Mutiny on the Bounty," and is, by far, a greater motion picture, not forgetting the quality of "Mutiny." Receiving expert adaptation by Dudley Nichols, skilful direction by John Ford and striking performances by a large cast, the play unfolds a touching although simple romance and a powerful adventure in the South Seas. There, in the Low Islands of Manukura and Motu Tonga, with hundreds of Polynesians taking part in the native scenes, one of the most spectacular and dramatic wind, storm and sea episodes ever photographed by a motion picture camera, roars and rages on to a catastrophic hurricane. It engulfs huts and homes, life and limb in its booming waves, denuding the island of population, habitation and vegetation.

Samuel Goldwyn again contributes to the screen a really outstanding play, mechanically awesome, yet smooth in its telling, about the heroic romance of a South Sea native boy and girl who are compelled to battle through the growing prosecution and rule-by-law of European settlers, finally escaping to a new life and love on another island with their baby daughter. They sail picturesquely over the horizon away from the village which was almost entirely destroyed by watery violence and thunder.

The story unfolded against exquisite South Pacific backgrounds and seascapes brings the native boy against the laws of the white man. His fistic encounter with a troublesome drunkard lands him in jail, where his love for his bride drives him in desperation to escape, only to be captured and sentenced additionally. Subsequent escapes mounts his sentence up to sixteen years, but after five harassed years and torture by the jailer, he succeeds in another outbreak and spirits his wife and baby to another and far-away island. An excellent musical score and overture establish the proper mood and in beating crescendos sets the stage for the great storm, culminating two years of preparation and filming expeditions to the islands. A scenically pretentious and colorful masterpiece in the traditionally lavish Goldwyn manner, yet as exciting and realistic as the best in screen drama.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

NEW YORK ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Last summer, at one of our Catholic girls' camps, a seventeen-year-old camper from a school in the Middle West asked me where she could stay alone in New York for a few days or a week. She wanted to say goodbye to a sister sailing for Rome and await her father who was returning from a business trip to England. Her mother had died when she was a little girl and there were no relatives or friends she could stay with in New York.

What could I tell her? There are no Catholic women's clubs which have accommodations for transients. What I did was to recommend a few good hotels where I know groups of college girls stay when in New York.

It was then that the idea crystallized for me that we do need a Catholic Women's Clubhouse in this city which will provide first-class hotel accommodations, where our Catholic women and girls can be proud and happy to come, and where they will find friendly service to supply their needs and desires.

Of course, there are innumerable hotels.. It is hard to choose among them. And they are lonely places for many in this great city. There are also a number of residences for young business girls earning limited salaries. Some of these residences might serve as very excellent models for any club. They offer club facilities, spacious lobbies and lounges, libraries and rooms for parties, swimming pools, gymnasia and game rooms, roof gardens and solaria, modern equipped laundries on residence floors, sewing-rooms and kitchenettes, suites of living-room, bedroom, dressing-room and bath, or a single room with shower, and, of course, fine cafeterias conducted by expert dietitians.

There must be hundreds of women and girls who come to New York to shop, to do business, or to make a brief visit of a day, a week, or a month or two, who would use such a clubhouse with deep, heartfelt thankfulness. Residences of the Y. W. C. A., of the Ladies Christian Union, of the Salvation Army, and various specially endowed residences for business girls and women, rarely have a vacant room and often have waiting lists of several hundred names. A directress of one modern residence accommodating about 250 girls, ages limited from sixteen to thirty, said that, at the rate of $9.50 to $12.50 per week for room and two meals a day (three on Sundays and holidays), the house had earned a surplus large enough to finance a smaller residence in the slum district. Think of it—a profit!

But what I have in mind is not that kind of residence, except in that our clubhouse should provide equally good or better facilities.

Thousands of girls and women in Greater New York would welcome membership in a Catholic Women's Club. Thousands of girls and women from far and near outside the city would be happy to have a new York affiliation. A central clubhouse could provide not only accommodations for individual visitors, but a meeting place for local and visiting organizations; a center for various Catholic college groups on visits to the city for football games, or dances, or opera, or museum trips; facilities for Junior organizations wishing to hold sports events, sports instructions, or social affairs; facilities for study clubs, and for a complete Catholic Reference Library (not lending), open to members with as little red tape as is found in Public Libraries; a place in the heart of New York convenient to the cathedral, to cultural centers, to shops and theatres, to uptown and downtown and crosstown transportation lines.

Soon the World's Fair, which will be open for two years, will bring to Greater New York, and inevitably to Manhattan, hundreds of thousands of people. It is to be expected that many will be Catholics. It is fairly certain that schools from far and near will be sending groups to see the Fair and New York at the same time. If there are others besides myself who believe that a Clubhouse for Catholic Women would be a desirable and self-supporting and successful undertaking I should like to learn what your readers think about it, and shall be grateful for any ideas offered.

MILDRED HAGAN.

LIFE IN NATIONALIST SPAIN

Malaga, Spain.

TO the Editor: The issue of October 15 has reached me here at Malaga and I have read and reread the article by Nena Belmonte. As one who has had some experience of Spain, past and actual, I would advise every reader of THE COMMONWEAL to read and reread and study and meditate on that article. Every word of it is truth; and it is an astonishing truth. She writes: ". . . It is not only the courage of his [Franco's] troops that is winning the war but the magnificent organization and cooperation of civilians of all classes." That latter is what is astonishing. It is what has most impressed me during my two months here, and it is what most astonishes all foreigners. I have met many of these, English, Irish, Americans and Germans, and they have all the same story to tell. Every one of them, especially if he has lived here for some time engaged in business or industry, has told me he could not have believed before that the Spanish people as he knew them were capable of doing what they have done in these past fifteen months, that he has had to revise his opinion of their capacity for work, for organization, for government, too; for in all local affairs in town and country the civilian population are governing themselves.

What the army has done is indeed marvelous, if one remembers that the old army did not exist in July, 1936. It was in reality a volunteer army that marched from victory to victory from Algeciras to the gates of Madrid; and it was a volunteer army that started from Pamplona, took possession of two of the four Basque provinces—Navarre is Basque—and liberated Irun and San Sebastian. But if the people could not have liberated themselves

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without the help of the army, neither could the army have done what Nena Belmonte describes in detail if the civilian population had not risen to the full demands of the situation.

It is really a new Spain that one sees here, new in the sense that a younger generation is in command, infused with a new spirit of determination, self-sacrifice and contempt for death and difficulties, a resurrection of that Spain of history when the great Isabel la Catolica could say, "The word 'impossible' is not Castilian." And this new Spain is determined that the abuses of the past, whether under monarchy or republic, shall not return.

In every conversation one hears, in every paper one reads, the abuses of monarchy and republic are roundly denounced and with even impartiality. The day of the perorating politicians who talked much and did nothing is gone and this new generation is determined that it shall not return. What they needed was unity of leadership, direction and objective. Now they have this.

As Nena Belmonte intimates—you will find it in her article if you study it—it is really a Labor Movement. Everybody must work. Just this week a worker who had been prominent in one of the Labor organizations said to me, "This movement is more Labor than military"; and they have appropriately named it the Spanish Phalanx of the J.O.N.S.—the initials in Spanish for Youthful Workers National Syndicate.

Read and reread Nena Belmonte's article. It is all true!

Rev. Owen B. McGuire.

THE TABLOIDS

Hoboken, N. J.

TO the Editor: The remarks on the tabloids you have carried in your correspondence columns recently seem to me to fall quite wide of their objectives. Mr. J. R. Sage greets your comments on the new format of the Milwaukee *Catholic Herald-Citizen* with a violent diatribe against the modern picture-newspaper and all its works. Barry Wells replies that a number of the tabloids are of a higher order and, from a somewhat limited first-hand knowledge, I suspect, commends some of the better papers without naming them. He shows from recent journalistic history that the more traditional exemplars of the American daily have, on spectacular occasions, been quite as active in playing up sex and crime as their more graphic contemporaries.

How much of a case—based on probable opinion or morally certain knowledge—could be built for or against the tabloids on the ground that they purge or inordinately stimulate the emotions à la "Art and Prudence" of Mortimer Adler? That would be the chief factor in deciding whether all secular tabloids or certain superior ones have a good or bad influence on society. But the original Commonweal comment seemed to imply no approval of the subject-matter of the secular tabloids anyway; it merely signaled the utilization of effective journalistic technique for the spread of Catholic news.

Jerome Miner.

Books

Obscure Heroism

The Diary of a Country Priest, by Georges Bernanos. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.75.

IN MANY ways this is a remarkable book, one written with beautiful art, full of a searching and delicate psychology, and revealing a simplicity so crystalline and a courage so humble as to lift what might have been a sordid tragedy to heroic heights.

Of plot in the ordinary sense there is very little, but from the first page to the last a real story is in progress, though a story almost entirely of spiritual conflict. A young priest of very humble origin is appointed to his first curacy in a dull country parish. His first impression is that of the dead weight of boredom, "the fermentation of a Christianity in decay." It is not in his nature to make any spectacular assault on this; instead he proceeds quietly with the round of his routine duties. But he soon comes to recognize that mere inertia is not the worst thing with which he has to contend.

The report is spread in the district that he is a secret tippler, though actually he is physically incapable of excess and lives mainly on bits of bread dipped in muddy wine. (Later he discovers that he has cancer of the stomach.) Even worse than this scandal-mongering is the malignancy of some of the children—horrible little monsters!—in his catechism class, and the hidden discord between the neighboring Comte and Comtesse and their daughter. Jealousy, hatred and pride slowly and secretly rot their souls. And though the little priest manages to bring the Comtesse to repentance just before her death, the daughter remains a fury all the more dangerous for being so quiet. Her cousin, a young soldier with the Foreign Legion, diagnoses the family character: "Greedy, hard, never content, with a quite unmanageable quality which must be the devil's share in us; it fills us with deep enmity for ourselves, and our virtues in consequence are so like our vices that God Himself will have a job to separate the bad boys from the saints in the family—supposing there are any. . . . My poor aunt found a motto for [our women]: All or Nothing!"

There are, however, some beautiful characters in the book: the Curé of an adjoining village, a robust, soldierly sort of a man with a power of tenderness and of understanding his fellows; and the poor drab who is the mistress of an ex-priest, formerly a friend of our little priest's when they were in the seminary together. This man, trying to earn his living as a commercial traveler, is a pathetic sentimentalist who refuses to face reality; but the girl is so selfless in her devotion to him that she refuses marriage so as not to stand in the way of his eventual return to his priesthood.

Among these people the diarist moves, accepting his parish's misunderstanding as he accepts his own wretched health in a spirit of heroism that is so perfect as not to be conscious of itself. And it is the same with his gifts of mind and soul: he, though with much of the saint in him, thinks of himself as an unprofitable servant, and in

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his simplicity is unaware how penetrating is the psychological analysis turned with severity upon himself and with unfailing compassion upon others. These "very simple trivial secrets of a very ordinary kind of life" reveal a personality anything but commonplace, one that notes with a kind of innocent malice the appalling mediocrity around him, yet does not flinch from an evil that sometimes seems to be absolute. "The Diary of a Country Priest" is a book unusually touching and beautiful, and, despite its exquisite restraint, makes the reader breathless with intensity.

JOHN KENNETH MERTON.

Courtesy First

Etiquette: The Blue Book of Social Usages, by Emily Post (Mrs. Price Post); illustrated with photographs and facsimiles of Social Forms. Complete New Edition. Rewritten. Revised. Reset. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company. $4.00.

IF ONLY the world were run strictly according to the decalogue of Moses and the social code of Mrs. Post, it would surely be a very pleasant place. One envisions an exquisitely ordered universe in which everyone from debutantes to motorists puts courtesy first; where an intelligent and self-respecting maid with "faultlessly smooth hair" opens the door, unless there is a footman, to the perfectly appointed house, where no one is overworked but each task is neatly apportioned—see Mrs. Post's timetable for the household with only one domestic; where hosts who remember "it is rude to be out when guests arrive" provide sufficient but not too much entertainment and guests are careful never to burn holes in bedspreads. If you put yourself in the hands of Mrs. Post, she will christen, marry and bury you with all the finer detail and start you safely off with Junior Etiquette in the Nursery.

She not only advises you how to write formal notes but how to address everyone—except the Pope—from the President and reigning sovereigns down to Baronets and Mother Superiors. She tells you the kind of letter your friends will most enjoy; what to do at a dinner when the maid brings in the jelly with the china mold still on top; how to go to bed in a Pullman; and exactly what to tip from the butler to the bellhop. She demonstrates how a well-dressed woman may motor through Europe with two suitcases; what assets are valuable in business and how many physical liabilities may be overcome with gargles and soap.

Though Mrs. Post holds to the conservative tradition of a dinner table without butter plates, she is broad enough to include Showers, Dessert Bridges and Surprise Parties in a chapter quaintly called "American Neighborhood Customs." Another full chapter has been added on "Fraternity House-parties," in which anxious mothers are assured that only three changes of costume are essential, and sympathy for the Fraternity hosts is shown in, "Don't scatter powder about or smear things with lip-stick."

In short, "Etiquette" is no mere social dictionary but may be likened to a modern code of chivalry. We especially underline her paragraphs on "Divorce" and "The

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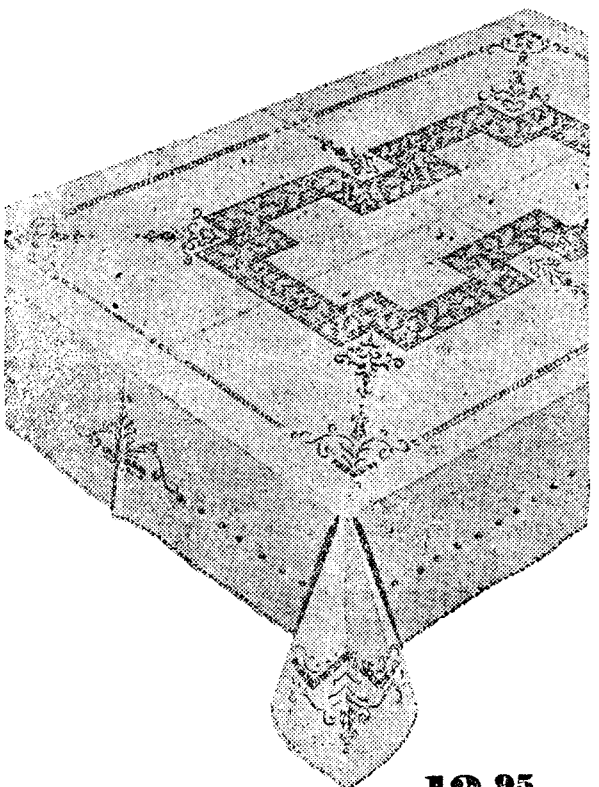

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ALL ON SPAIN

PHILIP II
by William Thomas Walsh

Dr. Walsh says that writing this book was like acting as sleuth in a detective story, many of the clues in which were missing, and all the evidence four centuries old! He is an amazingly good detective, for his portrait of Philip is undoubtedly the first that his contemporaries would have been likely to recognize. It shows him as great, but not extraordinary, merciful instead of sinister, a maker of magnificent successes and appalling mistakes—the greatest of which was the placing of Elizabeth on the throne of England. This is Dr. Walsh's first major work since *Isabella of Spain*, and we think will be hailed as even greater than that great biography. 726 pp. Nine illustrations. $5.00.

SPANISH REHEARSAL
by Arnold Lunn

Mr. Lunn is not content to get his news at second hand. He went to Spain himself, spent some time behind Franco's lines, and returned convinced that *Franco is fighting for the whole world's civilization.* This book is both a record of his experiences—and he is a man who notes the ridiculous, even in the midst of tragedy—and a judicial summing up based both on what he saw and on his wide reading on the subject. 230 pp. $2.50.

CORRESPONDENT IN SPAIN
by H. Edward Knoblaugh

As correspondent for the Associated Press, Mr. Knoblaugh saw Red Spain in action. His account of Loyalist methods in war and propaganda, plain and objective though it is, *could not be sent from Red Spain.* Although Mr. Lunn and Mr. Knoblaugh saw the Spanish war from opposing sides, and although they were not aware of each other's existence, the two books dovetail into each other in an astonishing way—a high tribute to the truthfulness and accuracy of both. 233 pp. $2.50.

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Real School for Charm," which is home. And doesn't she win the gratitude of all by suggesting in her inimitable way that if anyone has trouble with foreign words, let him quickly murmur under his breath, "Am at her house," before venturing on "Amateur"! Indeed we now no longer wonder that "Etiquette," even at the price, has had twenty-six printings.

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT.

Pushing through the Fog

Time of Our Lives, by Orrick Johns. New York: Stackpole Sons. $3.00.

IN THE sub-title of this book, the author tells us that he is writing the story of his father and himself. So long as he concerns himself with his father's career, the book has interest, form and a certain charm; when Mr. Johns details his own exploits for us, the charm and interest disappear and the very method of the writing changes, becomes hurried and unrealized.

The elder Johns grew up in post-Civil-War Missouri, edited a crusading, small-town newspaper, cut his journalistic teeth on several St. Louis newspapers, and established at last a connection with the Pulitzer newspaper régime that led to the editorship of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* and a long, honorable career. Mr. Johns writes well of his father and of old times in St. Louis; at the son's hands, the father is seen as an admirable, if somewhat cocksure, newspaperman of the old school. The city of St. Louis, its crudeness, its materialistic bias, Missouri politics, municipal corruption, William Marion Reedy and the fierce devotion with which the Middle West was seeking "culture" at that period, all these are made very real in the earlier part of the book.

The narrative then shifts to New York and takes up the author's activities as a pillar of that infinitely naive, pre-war Greenwich Village, his practise as a poet and his various occupations. Mr. Johns has a mind well stocked with liberal fetishes and he is a striking example of that curious mental process whereby self-styled liberals emancipate themselves with crows of joy from conventional theological dogma, only to throw themselves eventually into the arms of Swami Karl Marx. After a thoroughly hectic douse in European scenes, absorbing the culture of France, Italy, etc., apparently through the pores, Mr. Johns returns to America, goes out to Carmel, California, becomes a member of the Communist party, is appointed an associate editor of the *New Masses,* and winds up as supervisor of the WPA newswriters project in New York. At the conclusion of the book, he has just resigned his post and philosophizes a bit. "Whatever quality I had," he says, "was a kind of doggedness in pushing through the fog." From his narrative, one judges that.

There are several minor blunders throughout the book, notably, "William Marion Reedy attended the Jesuit Christian Brothers' School" and "Lionel Johnson and other shocking fellows of the nineties." Amazing to find that austere and delicate talent lumped in with the ragtag and bob-tail of the *fin de siècle.*

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

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Saint and Scholar

A Portrait of Thomas More, by Algernon Cecil. New York: G. P. Putnam's Son. $5.00.

EVEN in its diffident phrasing, Algernon Cecil's title introduces his study of More very happily. No hasty sketch; no simple delineation of a subject without background; in spite of its thorough, but unobtrusive, scholarship no scientific treatise; but a portrait, deeply observed, sensitively composed, imaginatively limned. In that modest, precise aspiration lies the reason for adding a volume to one of the most generously stocked shelves of biography in our day and for still quick appreciation by the reader who may know a dozen other lives of the "Scholar, Statesman, Saint."

If ever all the main biographical approaches to this "greatest Englishman" seem charted beyond profit in the venturing of a new survey, there will be yet one book waiting an author—a searching of the characters and tempers of the men who have taken delight in him. From Erasmus's letters to this latest of many notable studies close-ranked within a few years, the analyses gain richness of implication.

In every sense of the phrase, the book is beautifully made; but its special high impressions are those of rich texture, of the author's generosity and courtesy, and of his great joy in his work. Barrister, scholar, philosophic historian—witness his "Life of Robert Cecil" and his "Metternich"—in blood heir to the fame of Burghley and Eldon, in spirit, to the more ancient, tenacious Catholicism of England, Mr. Cecil has brought to his work a love maturing over a quarter of a century. (Have you noticed how many books on Thomas More confess or reveal years of study and of devoted meditation?) Through the literary charm of the book, through the glow of its most brilliant passages and the play of many lights and shadows over its story, we feel and respect the author's motivating dissatisfaction "that More's life and mind have not even yet been full appropriated to our uses." For others, surely, if not for himself, his book reduces that discontent.

OLIVE B. WHITE.

Modern Warfare

If War Comes, by Ernest Dupuy and George Fielding Eliot. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

WAR is horrible in any form without having to magnify and distort beyond all truth the way it is conducted. And, as the authors state, "We have clung as closely as possible to proven fact, indulged as little as possible in conjecture. Where we could we have sought rather to draw from the inexhaustible and photographic record of history the examples and precepts to drive home our points." That is what makes this book exceptional, for its does not take sides, but gives full space to the actual facts, letting them speak for themselves, whether they be implements of war, or the actions of nations.

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arms, and the tactical operations of both sides as viewed from the standards of results. Also the attitude of the different European nations toward Spain, present, past and future, is summed up in the author's statement, "They all need Spain." It would be well for the newspapermen of the United States to go over these twenty-three pages, for here they would find facts far different from many of the statements the press has presented.

Dealing with the aircraft, gas, tanks, and all other modern weapons, the authors have offered their subject-matter in a manner up to the standard of any European military expert and have gone further in dispelling the fog of uncertainty in respect to the future ways war is likely to be carried on.

In part two, the "Paths of Conquest" of the great nations of the world are outlined, giving their past, present and probable future desires in regard to conquest. And last but not least comes the chapter, "America on the Sidelines." Whether or not she would be drawn into another European debacle is guesswork, and these two men do not attempt an answer but give us an idea of what we should do to avert such a tragedy.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.

Melodrama

The Fortunes of Bridget Malone, by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00.

WHEN old Patrick Leary left his wife's great-niece, Bridget Malone, the sum of $4,790,000 he not only changed the convent school routine of a simple Irish-American girl of eighteen, but he provided Madame Bonnechance's Marriage Bureau with the opportunity of a lifetime. Most of the action of this entertaining story centers in Paris where Bridget, for the first time, meets her guardian, Mrs. Kathleen O'Donnell, one of the most popular sportswomen in Irish society and owner of the romantic Castle Clare. Shortly after Bridget's arrival in Paris, Ivan Bolonsky, a fake Russian Prince, under the tutelage of Madame Bonnechance, appears on the scene and, for a time, charms the still childish and unsophisticated heiress. Happily for Bridget, the pseudo-prince's greed is, in the end, the cause of his own downfall. The real prince-charming turns out to be none other than Kevin O'Donnell, her guardian's nephew. Mrs. O'Donnell, herself, fares none too badly in her recognition of a long dormant affection for an old suitor, Shane Desmond. The foursome repair to the idyllic surroundings of Castle Clare and there live happily ever afterward.

In the astute marriage broker, Clara Bonnechance, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes has created one of her most forceful characters. This novel compares favorably, with respect to sustained narrative continuity, to the author's well-known work, "The Chink in the Armour." For light reading, liberally seasoned with melodramatic effects, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes latest novel can be recommended. Its readability and general human interest make a happy combination.

EDWARD J. CLARKE.

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Briefer Mention

Augustus, by John Buchan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.50. The manner of Lord Tweedsmuir's fifty-first work is most objective, a cool narrative of Augustus's labor, styled in Scotch and almost classically Stoic prose. Its high interest is in the parallelism of the principate to modern days, and in the reaction, hierarchic if not authoritarian, of this important servant of modern empire. The insistence on many forms preserved by Augustus, admittedly moribund, is annoying and seems to prevent questioning about more actual spirit and vitality.

Retreat from the West, by No-Yong Park. Boston: Hale, Cushman and Flint. $3.00. Those who are inordinately aroused by Japan's current disregard for international protests should read this sketchy study, from a Sino-Japanese slant, of the rise and decline of western imperialism in the Far East. Our record makes a sorry spectacle, and Dr. Park believes the imminent return to our own backyards will do us worlds of good.

The Growth of the American Republic, by Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager. New York: Oxford University Press. Two volumes, $6.00. Completely revised and enlarged edition of the one-volume 1930 work. The authors have successfully created a vision of American civilization up through the labor troubles of last summer that is at once sharp and solid.

Science and Common Sense, by W. R. Thompson. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $3.00. Jacques Maritain writes the preface to this excellent critical survey which emphasizes the importance of cooperation between scientists and philosophers and correctly insists that the destruction of philosophy entails the dehumanization of science, and that in turn means, in the last analysis, the dehumanization of man.

The Village Carpenter, by Walter Rose. Cambridge: At the University Press. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50. The memories of a master craftsman, his own and bits from two generations back, are pictured through the eyes of one who has experienced beauty in woodcraft even in this age of speed. A lover of his work, the author brings his shop, tools and his different undertakings to us in simple and effective passages. One can well see how carpentry has become a hobby with many.

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